

THE
A R T
OF DIVINE
CONTENTMENT.

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Text.

PHIL. 4. II.

I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

THese words are brought in by way of *Prolepsis*, to anticipate and prevent an Objection. The Apostle had in the former Verses, laid down many grave and heavenly exhortations;
B among

among the rest, to be *carefull* for
nothing, Vers. 6. Not to exclude

* Neque enim prohibetur quid homo de rebus in posterum necessariis non sollicitetur, Aquin. in Heb. 13. 1 Tim. 5.8.

13. 1 Tim. 5.8. *Infidel.* Nor, 2. *A Religious*
care. For, we must give *all dili-*
gence to make our Calling and Electi-
on sure *. But 3. To ex-

* *Juber apostolus*, clude all * *anxious care* about the issues and events of things; *Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat* *; and in this sense it should be

a Christians care not to be care-
full. The word in the Greeke
[Carefull] comes from a Primi-
tive *, that signifies, To

* Dicuntur ^{μεμει-}
 ναυ αὐτῷ πρὸ μισθ- cut the heart in pieces, a
 ζην ἃ νῦν. soule-dividing Care : take
 heed of this. Wee are bid to com-

*Ps. 37. 5. *mit* * *our way unto the Lord*: the Hebrew word is, *Roll* * *thy way up on the Lord*. It is our work to cast care

The Art of divine Contentment.

3

care *, and it is Gods work to take *1Pet. 5.7
care. By our immoderacy we take
his work out of his hand.

Care, when it is *excentrick*, either
distrustfull, or distracting, is very
dishonorable to God; it takes away
his providence, as if he sate in hea-
ven, and minded not what became
of things here below; like a man
that makes a clock, and then leaves
it to go of it selfe. Immoderate
care takes the heart off from better
things; and usually while wee are
thinking how we shall do to live, we
forget how to die. *Curis tabescimus*
omnes. — Care is a spiritual can-
ker, that doth waste and dispirit; &
cui bono? We may sooner by our
care add a furlong to our grief, then
a cubit to our comfort. God doth
threaten it as a curse; *They shall eat*
their bread with carefulness *: better
fast, then eat of that bread. *Be care-
ful for nothing.*

*Ezek. 12
19.

Now lest any one should say,

B 2

yea,

yea, *Paul*, thou preacheſt that to us, which thou haſt ſcarce learned thy ſelf; Haſt thou learned not to be carefull? The Apoſtle ſeems tacitly to answer that in the words of the Text; *I have learned in whatſoever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.*

Egregia Sententia! A ſpeech worthy to be engraven upon our hearts, and to be written in letters of Gold upon the Crownes and Diadems of Princes. The Text doth branch it ſelf into theſe two generall parts.

I. The Scholar, *Paul* : *I have learned.*

II. The Leſſon : *In every ſtate to be content.*

CHAP.



CHAP. II.

The first branch of the Text, The Scholar, with the first Proposition.

I Begin with the first, I. The I. Scholar, and his proficiency; I have learned. Out of which I ^{1. Obseru.} shall *in transitu* observe two things ^{εμαθον, it is a pra-} by way of paraphrase. 1. It is ^{ctique word,} not *ηκιστα*, but *εμαθον*. The Apostle doth not say, I have *heard*, that in every state I should be content; but, I have *learned*. Whence, 1. Doctr. It is not enough for 1. Doctr. Christians to hear their duty, but they must *learne* their duty. It is one thing to heare, and another thing to learne; as it is one thing to eat, and another thing to concoct. Saint Paul was a Practitioner,

tioner. Christians hear much, but it is to be feared, learne little. There were four sorts of ground in the Parable *, and but one good ground. An embleme of this truth, many *Hearers*, but few *Learners*. There are two things which keep us from learning.

*Luk.8.5.

7:1

1. *Slighting what we hear.* Christ is the *Pearle of Price*; when we disesteeme this Pearle, we shall never learne, either its value, or its vertue. The Gospel is a rare Mystery; in one place it is call'd the *Gospell of Grace*, in another, * the *Gospell of Glory*; because in it, as in a transparent Glasse the glory of God is resplendent; But, he that hath learned to contemne this Mystery, will hardly ever learne to obey it. He that looks upon the things of Heaven as things by the by, and perhaps the driving of a trade, or carrying on some politick designe to be of greater importance;

this

* το εὐαγ-
 γελιον
 τῆς χάρι-
 το
 Αθ. 20. 24
 * το εὐαγ-
 γελιον
 τῆς δόξης.
 1 Cor. 4. 4.

this man is in the high road to damnation, and will hardly ever learne the things of his peace. Who will learne that which he thinks is scarce worth learning?

2. *Forgetting what we hear* *. If 2.
 a Scholar have his Rules laid before ^{* Tantum}
 him, and he forgets them as fast as ^{scimus}
 he reads them, he will never learn *. ^{quantum}
Aristotle calls the Memory, the ^{in memoria}
Scribe of the Soul; and *Bernard* ^{teneamus,}
 calls it the *Stomack* of the Soul, be- ^{Plato in}
 cause it hath a retentive faculty, and ^{Timæo.}
 turnes heavenly food into blood ^{* Jam. I. 25}
 and spirits. We have great me-
 mories in other things; we remem-
 ber that which is *vain*. *Cyrus* could
 remember the name of every Soul-
 dier in his huge Army; we remem-
 ber *injuries* *. This is to fill a preci- ^{* Scribit in}
 ous Cabinet with dung; but, ^{marmore}
quàm facilis oblivio boni? as *Hierom* saith, ^{læsus. Ci-}
 how soon doe we forget the sacred ^{cero l. 2. de}
 truths of God? We are apt to ^{orat.}
 forget three things; our *faults*, our
 friends,

friends ; our instructions. Many Christians are like Sieves; put a Sieve into the water, and it is full ; but take it forth of the water, and all runnes out : So, while they are hearing of a Sermon, they remember something ; but *take the Sieve out of the water*, assoone as they are gone out of the Church, all is forgotten. *Let these sayings* (saith Christ) *sinke down into your eares* * ; in the Originall it is, *put these sayings into your eares* * : As a man that would hide a jewel from being stolen, locks it up safe in his chest. *Let them sinke* ; The word must not onely fall as dew that wets the lease, but as raine which soakes to the root of the tree, and makes it fructifie. Oh how often doth Satan, that fowle of the Aire, pick up the good seed that is sowne !

* Luke 9.

44.

* 3121
v. 11.

Use. Trial.

Use. Let me put you upon a serious tryall ; Some of you have heard

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heard much; you have lived forty, fifty, sixty years under the blessed Trumpet of the Gospel; What have you learned? You may have heard a thousand Sermons, and yet not learned one. Search your consciences.

1. You have heard much against sin: are you *Hearers*: or are you *Scholars*?

I.

How many Sermons have you heard against *Covetousnesse*; That it is the *root*, on which Pride, Idolatry, Treason do grow *? one calls it a * *Metropolitan sin*: It is *ma-*
lum complexum, it doth twist a great many finnes in with it. There is hardly any sinne, but Covetousnesse is a maine ingredient into it; and yet are you like the two daughters of the Horse-leach, that cry, *Give, give*. How much have you heard against *rash Anger*; that it is a short pbrensie, a * *dry*
drunkennesse; That it rests in the *bosome*

* 2 Tim. 3.

2 & 4.

* Μηδὲ οὐδὲ

λεν παύσας

καὶ αὐτὰς

* Ira est

brevi in-

sania. Sen.

* Quid prodest vinum
non bibere, & ira in-
briari? Hieron. Eccl.

7. 9.

* Magnoque irarum
fluctuat aestu. Virg.

basome of fooles *; and up-
on the least occasion do
your spirits * begin to take
fire? How much have you
heard against Swearing? It

is Christs expresse mandate, Swear

* Mat. 5. not at all *; this sinne of all other

³⁴ may be tearm'd the *unfruitful work*

* Eph. 5. 11 *of darknesse* *. It is neither sweet-
ned with pleasure, nor enriched

with profit, (the usual vermilion
wherewith Satan doth paint sinne.)

Swearing is forbidden with a *sub-
pana*. While the swearer shoots his
oaths, like *flying arrows* at God,
to pierce his glory; God shoots a

* Zach. 5. *flying roll* of curses * against him,

v. 2, & 4. and do you make your tongue a

racket, by which youASSE oaths
as Tennis-balls? Do you sport
your selves with oaths as the Phi-
listines did with *Samson*, which
will at last pull the house about
your eares? Alas! how have they
learned what sin is, that have not yet
learned

learned to leave sinne? doth he know what a viper is, that playes with it?

2. You have heard much of Christ, have you learned Christ? The Jewes (as one saith) carried Christ in their *Bibles*, but not in their *hearts**; Their sound went into all the earth*, Rom. 10. 18. The Prophets and Apostles were as Trumpets, whose sound went abroad into the world; yet many thousands who heard the noise of these Trumpets, had not learned Christ; *They have not all obeyed*, yet. 16*.

* Hieron.

* Rom. 10.
18

* *οὐ πάντες ὑπακούσαντες.*

1. A man may know much of Christ, and yet not learn Christ. The devils knew Christ*.

* Mar. 1.
24

2. A man may preach Christ, and yet not learn Christ; as *Judas* and the pseudo-Apostles*.

* Phil. 5. 15

3. A man may profess Christ, and yet not learn Christ. There are many Professors in the world

* Mat. 7.
22, 23. world that Christ will professe
gainst*.

Quest. Quest. What is it then to learne

Ans. 1. Christ? Ans. 1. To learne Christ
is to be *made like Christ*; when
the divine characters of his Holiness
are engraven upon our hearts. *We*
with open face, beholding as in a glasse
the glory of the Lord, are changed
*into the same image**. There is

* 2 Cor. 3.
18. Metamorphosis made; a sinner view-
ing Christs Image in the glasse of
the Gospel, is transformed into that
Image. Never did any man look
upon Christ with a spiritual eye, but
went away quite changed. A true
Saint is a divine Landskip or picture,
where all the rare beauties of Christ
are lively pourtrayed and drawn
forth. He hath the same Spirit, the
same judgement, the same will with
Jesus Christ.

2. To learne Christ, is to *believe*
in him; *My Lord, my God**. When
* Joh. 20.
28 we donot only *credere Deum*, but in
Deum

Deum; which is the actual application of Christ to our selves, and as it were the spreading of the sacred medicine of his blood upon our souls. You that have heard much of Christ, and yet cannot with an humble adherence say, *My Jesus*; be not offended if I tell you, the devil can say his Creed as well as you.

3. To learne Christ, is to *live Christ*. When we have Bible-conversations, our lives as rich Diamonds cast a sparkling lustre in the Church of God*; and are (in some sense) parallel with the life of Christ, as the Transcript with the Original. So much for the first notion of the word.

*Phil. 1. 27

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Containing the second Proposition.

I I.

2. Observ. *ἔμαθον* is a word imports difficulty.

* *Ἐμαθον* significat hanc rem esse disciplinam, & exercitationem, & se divinitus edoctum esse. Estius in loc. Beza.

Non ex revelatione, aut ex libri didicit, sed ex longo rerum usu, & gratia Christi per Spiritum residentem. Zachary.

Doctr. 2.

* *Ἀλλὰ διδασκαλίας ἐστὶ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ γυμνασίας καὶ μελέτης, καὶ ὅτι ἐνιστάμεθα ἐν αὐτῇ, ἀλλὰ καὶ σφόδρα δύσκολον, καὶ κατὰ τὸν* Chrysost.

II. **T**His word *ἔμαθον* I have learned, is a word imports difficulty, shews how hardly the Apostle came by his contentment of minde; it was not *παρὰ ingentum*. St. Paul did not come naturally by it, but he had learned it; it cost him many a prayer and tear, it was taught him by the Spirit.

Whence Doctr. 2. Good things are hard to come by. The businesse of religion is not so facile as most do imagine. I have learned, saith St. Paul*. Indeed you need not learn a man to sin, this

is natural *, and therefore facile, it comes as water out of a Spring. Tis an easie thing to be wicked; Hell will be taken without storm *, but matter of Religion must be learned. To cut the flesh is easie; but to prick a vein, and not cut an artery is hard. The trade of sinne needs not to be learned, but the *Art of Divine Contentment* is not atchieved without holy industry; *μαθον, I have learned.*

* Pl. 58.3

* *Facilis
descensus
Averni.*

There are two pregnant reasons, why there must be so much study and exercitation.

1. Because spiritual things are *against nature*. Every thing in Religion is antipodes to nature. There are in Religion two things, *Credenda*, & *Facienda*, and both are against nature. 1. *Credenda*, Matters of faith. As, for a man to be justified by the righteousness of another, to become a foole that he may be wise, to save all by losing all; this is *against nature*. 2. *Facienda*, ends,

1. *Contra
naturam.*

1. *Credenda*

2. *Facienda*

ends, Matters of practice. As

1. *Selfe-denial*; for a man to deny his own *wisdom*, and see himselfe blinde; his own *will*, and have himselfe melted into the will of God; plucking out the right eye, beheading and crucifying that sin which is the *favorite*, and lies nearest to the heart.

* *Peccatum in deliciis.*
Bern

For a man to be dead to the world, and in the midst of want to abound; for him to take up the Crosse, and follow Christ, not onely in golden, but bloody paths; to embrace Religion when it is dress'd in its night-cloaths, all the Jewels of honour and preferment being pull'd off; this is *against nature*, and therefore must be learned. 2. *Selfe-examination*.

Malum est vitium excusare, quam excutere. Sen.

For a man to take his heart (as a watch) all in pieces; to set up a spiritual inquisition, or Court of conscience, and traverse things in his own soul; to take *David's* candle and lantern*, and search for sin; nay, as Judge to passe the sentence upon him.

* *Psalm. 119. vers. 105.*

himself, * this is *against nature*, and will not easily be attained to without Learning. 3. *Self-reformation.*

To see a man as *Caleb*, of another spirit, walking antipodes to himself, his heart changed, the current of his life altered, and running into the channel of Religion; this is wholly *against nature*, and is as strange as to see the earth fly upward, or the bowle runne contrary to its own by-asse. When a stone ascends, it is not a natural motion, but a violent; the motion of the soul heaven-ward, is a violent motion, it must be learned: flesh and blood is not skill'd in these things: Nature can no more cast out Nature, then Satan can cast out Satan.

* 2 Sam.
24. 17.
Me, me, ad-
sum qui st-
ti, in me
convertit
ferrum.

2. Because spiritual things are *above nature*. There are some things *in nature* that are hard to finde out, as the causes of things, which are not learned without studie. *Aristotle*, a great Philosopher (whom some have

2. *Supra naturam.*

call'd an Eagle fallen from the clouds,) yet could not finde out the motion of the River *Euripus*, therefore threw himselfe into it; What then are divine things, which are in a sphere above Nature, and beyond all humane disquisition? as the Trinity, the hypostatical Union, the mystery of Faith, to beleieve against hope; onely Gods Spirit can light our candle here. The Apostle calls these *the deep things of God* *. The Gospel is full of Jewels, but they are lock'd up from sense and reason. The Angels in heaven are searching into these sacred depths *.

* Ta'βa'θn
rē oēē.
1 Cor. 2. 10

* 1 Pet. 1. 12
Use.

Use. Let us beg the Spirit of God to teach us; we must be *divinim edocti*: The Eunuch could read, but he could not understand, till *Philip* joyned himself to his chariot *. Gods Spirit must joyn himself to our chariot; He must teach, or we cannot learn: *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord* *. A man may read the

* Aa. 8. 29

* Isa. 54. 13

figure

figure on the Diall; but he cannot tell how the day goes, unless the Sun shine upon the Diall; we may read the Bible over, but wee cannot learn to purpose, till the Spirit of God *shine into our hearts* *. Oh, ^{* 2 Cor 4.5} Implore this blessed Spirit, it is Gods Prerogative Royall to teach. *I am the Lord thy God, that teacheth thee to profit* *. Ministers may tell us our lesson, God onely can teach us; We have lost both our hearing and eyesight, therefore are very unfit to learn. Ever since *Eve* listened to the Serpent, we have been deafe; and since she looked on the tree of Knowledge, we have been blinde; but, when God comes to teach, he removes these impediments *. We ^{* Job 35.5.} are naturally dead *, who will go about to teach a dead man? Yet behold, God undertakes to make dead men to understand mysteries! God is the grand Teacher. This is the reason the Word preached works

so differently upon men : two in a Pew; the one is wrought upon effectually, the other lies at the Ordinances as a dead childe at the brest, and gets no nourishment. What is the reason? because the heavenly gale of the Spirit blows upon one, and not upon the other. One hath the anointing of God, which

* 1 Jch. 2. teacheth him all things *, the other

27.

hath it not. Gods Spirit speaks sweetly, but irresistibly. In that heavenly doxology, none could sing the new song, but those who were sealed in their foreheads *: reprobates could not sing it *. Those that are

* Rev. 14. 2

* NOVUM

Canticum

reprobi discere non

possunt.

PARAS.

skifull in the mysteries of salvation must have the seal of the Spirit upon them. Let us make this our prayer. Lord, breath thy Spirit into thy Word

* Luke 11.

13.

and we have a promise, which may add wings to prayer. If * yee that are being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children : how much more shall your heavenly Father

give

give his Spirit to them that aske him?

And thus much of the first part of the Text, *The Scholar*, which I intended only as a short glosse or paraphrase.



CHAP. IV.

The second branch of the Text, The Lesson it selfe, with the Proposition.

II. Come now to the second, which is the maine thing, *The Lesson it selfe; In whatever state I am, therewith to be content.*

II.

Here was a rare piece of learning indeed, and certainly more to be wondered at in Saint Paul, that he knew how to turne himself to every condition, then all the learning in

the world besides; which hath been so applauded in former ages by *Fulius Cesar*, *Protony*, *Xenophon*, the great admirers of Learning.

The Text hath but few words in it, *In every state content*; but if that be true which once *Fulgentius* said, that the most golden sentence is ever measured by brevity and suavity, then this is a most accomplished speech: here is *magnum in parvo*. The Text is like a precious Jewel, little in quantity, but great in worth and value.

Doct.

The maine Proposition I shall insist upon, is this *Doctr.* That a gracious spirit is a contented spirit. The Doctrine of contentment is very superlative; and till we have learned this, we have not learned to be Christians.

1. It is an *hard Lesson*. The Angels in heaven had not learned it, they were not contented. Though their estate was very glorious, yet

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they were still soaring aloft, and aimed at something higher. *Jude ver. 6.* The Angels which kept not their first estate. They kept not their estate, because they were not contented with their estate. Our first Parents cloath'd with the white robe of innocency in Paradise, had not learned to be content; they had aspiring hearts, and thinking their humane nature too low and home-spun, would be crowned with the Deity, and be as gods; Though they had the choice of all the trees in the Garden, yet none would content them but the tree of Knowledge, which they supposed would have been as eye-salve to have made them omniscient. Oh then, if this Lesson were so hard to learne in innocency, how hard shall we finde it*, who are clogged with corruption? ** Gen. 3.5. * Ars omnino mirabilis, quae toto cordis ad-*

2. It is of *Universal extent*, it concerns all. 1. It concernes Rich men. One would think it needlesse

** Ars omnino mirabilis, quae toto cordis ad-*
nisiu discenda est.
Greg. hom. 16.
in Ezech.

to presse those to Contentment whom God hath blessed with great estates, but rather perswade them to be humble and thankfull; nay, but I say, *Be content*. Rich men have their discontents as well as others. As appears, 1. When they have a great estate, yet they are discontented that they have no more; they would make the hundred talents a thousand. A man in wine, the more he drinks, the more he thirsts: Covetousnesse is a dry dropsie; an earthly heart is like the grave, *that is never satisfied* *; therefore I say to you rich men, *Be content*.

* Sicut by dropicus.

Quod plus sunt potes, ed plus sitiuntur aqua Hyperius.

* Prov. 30.

16.

* Τὸν οὐ-
δὲλαρ ἡ-
δὲ ἡγέρ-
λα.

* A. 5.

36.

2. Rich men, if we may suppose them to be content with their estate, (which is very seldome;) yet, though they have *estate* enough, they have not *honour* enough *; if their *barnes* are full enough, yet their *turrets* are not high enough. They would be some body in the world, as *Theudas* who boasted himselfe to be some body *.

they

they never go so chearfully, as when the winde of honor and applause fills their sails; if this wind be down, they are discontented. One would think *Haman* had as much as his proud heart could desire; he was set above all the Princes, advanced upon the pinnacle of honour to be the second man in the kingdom *; yet in the midst of all his pompe, because *Mordecai* would not uncover and kneele, he is discontented, *vers. 2.* and full of wrath, *vers. 5.* and there is no way to assuage this pleurisie of revenge, but by letting all the Jewes blood, and offering them up in sacrifice. The itch of honour is seldom allayed without blood; therefore I say to you rich men, *Be content.* * *Esth. 3. 1.*

3. Rich men, if we may suppose them to be content with their honour, and magnificent titles, yet they have not alwayes Contentment in their relations. She that lies in the bosome, may sometimes blow the coals

coals, as *Jobs* wife, who in a pe-
 would have him fall out with God
 himself, *Curse God and die*. Some-
 times children cause discontent, how-
 oft is it seen that the mothers milk
 doth nourish a Viper? and he that
 once sucked her brest, goes about to
 suck her blood? Parents do often
 of *Grapes* gather thornes, and of *Figs*
 thistles. Children are Sweet-briar.
 Like the Rose, which is a fragrant
 flower; but, as *Basil* saith, it hath its
 prickles. Our Relative comforts are
 not all pure wine, but mixed; they
 have in them more dregs then spirits,
 and are like that River *Plutarch*
 speaks of*, where the waters in the
 morning runne sweet, but in the e-
 vening run bitter. We have no *char-*
ter of exemption granted us in this
 life; therefore rich men had need be
 called upon to be contented.

* γλυκύ-
 πικρόν.

2. The Doctrine of Content-
 ment concernes poore men. You
 that do not suck so liberally from the
 breasts

blessings of providence, *be content*; it is an hard Lesson, therefore it had need be set upon the sooner. How hard is it when the livelihood is even gone, a great estate boyled away almost to nothing, then to be content? The means of subsistence is in Scripture called *our life*, because it is the very sinewes of life. The woman in the Gospel spent *all her living upon the Physicians*; in the Greek it is, *ἅπαν τὸν βίον*, She spent her whole life upon the Physicians, because she spent her means by which she should live. 'Tis much when poverty hath clipped our wings, then to be content: but, *difficilia pulchra*; though hard, it is excellent; and the Apostle here had learnt in every state to be content.

* Luk. 8.
43.

God had brought Saint Paul into as great a variety of condition, as ever we read of any man, and yet he was content; else sure he could never have gone through it with so much cheer.

cheerfulnesse. See into what vicissitudes this blessed Apostle was cast.

* 2 Cor. 4. 8

We are troubled on every side *, there was the sadnesse of his condition; but not distressed, there was his content in that condition; *We are perplexed*, there is his affliction; but not in despaire, there is his contentation. And if we read a little further, *In afflictions* *

* 2 Cor. 6. 4

in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, &c. there is his trouble: and behold

* vers. 10.

his content; * *As having nothing, yet possessing all things.* When the Apostle was driven out of all, yet in regard of that sweet Contentment of minde (which was like musick in his soule) he possessed all. We read a short Map or History of his sufferings, *In prisons more frequent* *, in

* 2 Cor. 11.

23, 24, 25.

deaths oft, &c. Yet behold the blessed frame and temper of his spirit, *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

Which way soever Providence did

did blow, he had such heavenly skill and dexterity, that he knew how to steer his course. For his outward estate he was indifferent; he could be either on the top of *Jacobs* ladder, or the bottom; he could sing either *glacientia* or *lachryma*, the dirge or the antheme; he could be any thing that God would have him: *I know how to want, how to abound*; here is a rare patterne for us to imitate. *Paul* in regard of his faith and courage, was like a Cedar, he could not be stirred: but for his outward condition, he was like a *Reed*, bending every way with the winde of Providence. When a prosperous gale did blow upon him, he could bend with that, *I know how to be full*: and when a boysterous gust of affliction did blow, he could bend in humility with that; *I know how to be hungry*. Saint *Paul* was *ἀνὴρ ὑποτακτικός* (as *Aristotle* speaks) like a *Die*, that hath foure squares; throw it which way you wil,
it

Homo quæ-
dratus.
Brahm.

It falls upon a bottome: Let God
throw the Apostle which way he
would, he fell upon this *bottome* of
Contentment. A contented spirit
is like a Watch; though you carry it
up and down with you, yet the spring
of it is not shaken, nor the wheels
out of order, but the watch keeps its
perfect motion: So it was with St.
Paul; though God had carried him
into various conditions, yet he was
not lift up with the one, nor cast
down with the other. The *spring* of
his heart was not broken, the *wheels*
of his affections were not disordered,
but kept their constant motion to-
wards heaven; *still content*. The
Ship that lies at anchor may some-
times be a little shaken, but never
sinks: Flesh and blood may have its
fears and disquiets, but grace doth
check them: A Christian having
cast anchor in heaven, his heart never
sinks; a gracious spirit is a contented
spirit.

This

The Art of divine Contentment.

91

This is a rare Art. *Paul* did not learn it at the feet of *Glennatol*. *I*

I am instructed: *per. p. m. p. a. l. ** *ver. p. 2.* ** μυστήριον*
*I am initiated into this holy * myste-* ** μυσ.*
ry; as if he had said, I have gotten the ** Mysteriū*
divine Art, I have the knack of it; *initiatu*
God must make us right Artists. *sum.*
If we should put some men to an Art *Zanchy.*
that they were not skill'd in, *Sacris im-*
how unfit would they be for it? *buius sum.*
put an *Ambros.*

husband-man to Limning or drawing Pictures, what strange work would he make? this is out of his sphere. Take a Limner that is exact in laying of colours, and put him to plough, or set him to planting and grafting of trees, this is not his Art, he is not skill'd in it: Bid a natural man live by faith, and when all things go crosse, *Be contented*; you bid him do that he hath no skill in, you may as well bid a childe guide the sterne of a Ship; To live contented upon God in the deficiency of outward comforts, is an Art which *flesh and blood*

blood hath not revealed ; nay , many of Gods own children, who excel in some duties of religion , when they come to this of *Contentment*, how do they bungle? they have not yet commenced Masters of this Art.



CHAP. V.

The resolving of some Questions.

FOR the illustration of this Doctrine, I shall propound these questions.

Quest.

Quest. 1. Whether a Christian may not be sensible of his condition, and yet be contented?

Answ.

Answ. Yes; For else he is not a Saint, but a Stoick. Rachel did well to weep for her children, (*there was nature*;) but her fault was, she refused to be comforted, (*there was discontent*.)

content.) Christ himself was sensible when he sweat great drops of blood, and said; *Father if it be possible, let this cup passe from me* * yet *Mar. 16.* he was contented, he did martyr and crucifie his own will: *Neverthelesse, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* The Apostle bids us *humble our selves under the mighty hand of God* * which *2 Pet. 5. 6.* we cannot do unlesse we are sensible of it.

Qⁿ. 2. Whether a Christian may Quest. not lay open his grievances to God, and yet be contented?

Ans^r. Yes: *Unto thee have I open- Ans^r. ed my cause,* Jer. 20. 12. * and *Da- * Jer. 20. vid poured out his complaint before 17. the Lord* *. We may cry to God, * *Ps. 142. 2* and desire him to write down all our injuries; Shall not the childe complaine to his Father? When any burden is upon the spirit, Prayer gives vent, it easeth the heart: *Hannah's spirit was burdened, I am (says she) a woman of a troubled spirit* * *1 Sam. 1. 18.*

D

Now,

Now having prayed and wept, she went away, and was no more sad; onely, here is the difference between an holy complaint, and a discontented complaint; in the one we complain to God, in the other we complain of God.

Quest.

Quest. 3. What is it properly that Contentment doth exclude?

Ans.

Ans. There are three things which Contentment doth banish out of its Diocese, and can by no means consist with it.

What contentment excludes.

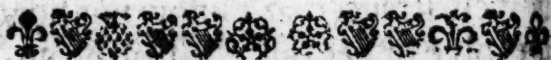
1. It excludes a *vexatious repining*, this is properly the daughter of Discontent. *I mourn in my complaint*: he doth not say, I murmur in my complaint. Murmuring is no better then mutinie in the heart; it is a rising up against God. When the Sea is rough and unquiet, it casts forth nothing but foame; when the heart is discontented, it casts forth the foam of anger, impatience, and sometimes little better then blasphemie.

mie. Murmuring is nothing else but the scum which boils off from a discontented heart.

2. It excludes an *uneven discomposure*: When a man saith, I am in such straits, that I know not how to evolve or get out, I shall be undone. Head and heart are so taken up, that a man is not fit to pray, or meditate, &c. he is not himself: just as when an Army is routed, one man runs this way, and another that, the Army is put into disorder: So a mans thoughts runne up and down distracted. Discontent doth dislocate and unjoynt the soul, it pulls off the wheels.

3. It excludes a *childish despondency*, and this is usually consequent upon the other. A man being in an hurry of minde, not knowing which way to extricate, or winde himself out of the present trouble, begins *succumbere oneri*, to faint and sink under it. For Care is to the minde

as a burden to the back, it loads the spirits, and with overloading sinks them. A despondent spirit is a discontented spirit.



CHAP. VI.

Shewing the nature of Contentment

What contentment is.

HAVING answered these Questions, I shall in the next place come to describe this *αὐταρκεια*, or Contentment.

* *Se æqua
nimir
fert, Bede.*

It is a sweet temper of spirit whereby a Christian carries himself * in an equal poize in every condition. The nature of this will appear more clear in these three Aphorisms.

I.

Anthoni in.

* *Αὐταρκεια
non acqui-
sit, sed
infusio: e.*

1. Contentment is a *divine thing*; it becomes ours not by *acquisition*, but *infusion*: it is a slip taken off from the tree of life, and planted by

the Spirit of God in the soul; it is a fruit that grows not in the garden of Philosophy, but is of an heavenly birth: It is therefore very observable, that *Contentment* is joyned with *Godlinesse*, and goes in equipage; *But godlinesse with Contentment is great gaine**. *Contentment* being a consequent of *godlinesse*, or concomitant, or *both*: I call it *divine*, to contradistinguish it to that *Contentment* which a moral man may arrive at. Heathens have seemed to have this *Contentment*, but it was onely *shadow* and picture of it, the *Beryll*, not the true *Diamond*: theirs was but *civil*, this is *sacred*: theirs was only from principles of *Reason*, this of *Religion*: theirs was onely lighted at Nature's torch, this at the Lamp of Scripture. Reason may a little teach *Contentment*; as thus, Whatever my condition be, this is that I am born to; and if I meet with crosses, it is

*1 Tim. 6. 6

* Ferre
quam sor-
tem omnes
patiuntur,
nemo recu-
sat.

but *πάντων μερίαν*, a Catholick mis-
ery; all have their share, why there-
fore should I be troubled? Reason
may suggest this; and indeed
this may be rather *constraint*, then
content; but to live securely and
cheerfully upon God in the abate-
ment of creature-supplies, *Religion*
only can bring this into the soules
exchequer.

2.
Aphorism.

2. Contentment is an *intrinsic*
cal thing; it lies within a man; not
in the bark, but the root. Con-
tentment hath both its fountain
and streame in the soul. The Beam
hath not its light from the Aire
the beames of comfort which a con-
tented man hath, do not arise *ex-*
trinsecè from forraigne comforts;
but from within. As sorrow is seated
in the spirit, *The heart knows its own*
grief*: So Contentment lies with-
in in the *soul*, and doth not depend
upon externals. Hence I gather,
that outward troubles cannot hinder

* Prov. 14.

10.

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this blessed Contentment; it is a spiritual thing, and ariseth from spiritual grounds, *viz.* *The apprehension of Gods love.* When there is a tempest without, there may be music within: a Bee may sting through the skin, but it cannot sting to the heart: Outward afflictions cannot sting to a Christians heart, where Contentment lies. Thieves may plunder us of our money and plate, but not of this pearle of Contentment, unlesse we are willing to part with it; for it is locked up in the *cabinet of the heart.* The soul which is possessed of this rich treasure of Contentment, is like *Noah* in the Ark, that can sing in the midst of a Deluge.

3. Contentment is an *Habitual thing*, it shines with a fixed light in the firmament of the soul. Contentment doth not appear onely now and then, as some Starres which are seen but seldome: it is a settled temper

3.

Apborism.

per of the heart. One action doth not denominate: he is not said to be a liberal man, that gives almes once in his life; a covetous man may do so, but he is said to be liberal, that is *given to liberality* *; that is, who upon all occasions is willing to indulge the necessities of the poor: so he is said to be a contented man, that is given to Contentment. It is not *casual*, but *constant*. Aristotle in his Rhetorick, distinguisheth between colours in the face that arise from *passion*, and those which arise from *complexion*; the pale face may look red when it blusheth, but this is only a passion: he is said properly to be ruddy and sanguine, who is constantly so, it is his complexion. He is not a contented man who is so upon an occasion, (and perhaps when he is pleased,) but who is so constantly, it is the habit and complexion of his soule.

* Rom. 12.

13.



CHAP. VII.

Reasons pressing to holy Contentment.

HAVING opened the nature of Contentment, I come next to lay down some reasons, or arguments to Contentment, which may preponderate with us.

The first is, *Gods precept*. It is charged upon us as a duty; *Be content with such things as you have*; * the same God who hath bid us believe, hath bid us be content; if we obey not, we runne our selves into a spirituall *premunire*. Gods Word is a sufficient warrant; it hath *authority* in it, and must be a *superseas*, or *sacred Spell* to discontent; *Ipse dixit* was enough among *Pythagoras* his Scholars. *Be it enacted*, is the

Reason, 1.
Virtue
precepti.
* Heb. 13.
5.

* Mat. 8.
26.
Reason 2.
Virtute
promiss.

the Royall stile. Gods word must be the star that guides, and his Will the weight that moves our obedience; his *stat* is a Law, and hath majesty enough in it to captivate us into obedience; our hearts must not be more unquiet then the raging Sea, which at his Word is still'd *.

2. The second reason inforcing Contentment, is, Gods promise. For, *Hee hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,* Heb. 13. 5. Where God hath engaged himselfe, under hand and seale, for our necessary provisions. If a King should say to one of his Subjects, I will take care for thee; as long as I have any Crown-revenues, thou shalt be provided for; if thou art in danger, I will secure thee; if in want, I will supply thee; would not that Subject be content? Behold, God hath here made a Promise to the Beleever, and as it were, entered into bond for his security;

ity; I will never leave thee; Shall not this charm down the devil of Discontent? Leave thy fatherles children with me, I will preserve them alive*. Me thinks I see the godly ^{*Jer. 49.18} man on his death-bed much discontented, and heare him complaining, What will become of my wife and children when I am dead and gone? they may come to poverty: saith God, Trouble not thy self, Be content, I will take care of thy children, and, *Let thy widow trust in mee.* God hath made a Promise to us, *that he will not leave us,* and hath entail'd the promise upon our wife and children, and will not this satisfie? True Faith will take Gods single bond without calling for witness.

3. Be contented, *by vertue of* ^{Reason. 3.} *Decree.* ^{Virtue} What ever our condition ^{Decree.} be, God the great Umpire of the world hath *ab aeterno* decreed that condition for us, and by his providence

dence ordered all appertinances thereunto. Let a Christian often think with him selfe, who hath plac'd me here, whether I am in an higher sphere, or in a lower? not chance or fortune, (as the pur-blinde Heathens imagined;) no, it is the wise God that hath by his providence fixed me in this Orbe: We must act that scene which God will have us; say not, Such an one hath occasioned this to me; look not too much at the under-wheel. We read in *Ezekiel* of a *wheele within a wheele*; Gods Decree is the cause of the turning of the wheeles; and his Providence is the inner wheele that moves all the rest. Gods Providence is that *πῦλον* or helme, which turnes about the whole ship of the Universe. Say then as boldly *David*; *I was silent* *
 * *Psal. 39* *because thou, Lord, didst it* *
 9 Gods Providence (which is nothing else but the carrying on of

*Ezek. 1.

16.

Psal. 39 *Psal. 39*

9

of his Decree,) should be a
superfedeas and counterpoison a-
 gainst discontent; God hath set us
 in our station, and he hath done it
 in wisdom.

We fancy such a condition of
 life good for us, whereas if we were
 our owne carvers we should often
 cut the * worst piece. *Lot* be-
 ing put to his choice, did choose *So-*
dom *, which soon after was burnt
 with fire. *Rachel* was very desirous
 of children, *Give me children or*
Idie *; and it cost her her life in
 bringing forth a childe. *Abraham*
 was earnest for *Ishmael*, *O that Ish-*
mael may live before thee * ! but he
 had little comfort either of him or
 his seed; he was borne a sonne of
 strife; *His hand was against every*
man; and every mans hand against
him. The Disciples wept for
 Christ's leaving the world; they
 chose his corporal presence, where-
 as it was best for them that Christ
 should

* *Illa eli-*
ginus que
plus nocent
quam pla-
cent.

* Gen. 13.
 10.

* Gen. 30.
 1.

* Gen. 17.
 18.

should be gone, for else *the Comforter would not come* *. *David chose the life of his childe, he wept and fasted for it* *; whereas if the childe had lived, it would have been a perpetuall monument of his shame. We stand oft in our own light; if we should sort, or parcell out our owne comforts, we should hit upon the wrong. Is it not well for the childe, that the Parent doth chuse for it? were it left to its self, it would perhaps chuse a knife to cut its own fingers. A man in a paroxysme calls for wine; which if he had, were little better then poyson: 'tis well for the Patient, that he is at the Physicians appointment.

The consideration of a Decree determining, and a Providence disposing all things that fall out, should work our hearts to holy Contentment. The wise God hath ordered our condition: if he sees it better for us to abound, we shall abound;

if

if he
shall
dispo
God
same
all;
be ba
weath
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suit o
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low,
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if he sees it better for us to want, we shall want; be content to be at Gods dispose.

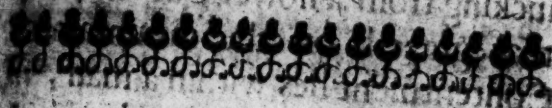
God sees in his infinite wisdom, the same condition is not *convenient* for all; that which is good for one, may be bad for another: one season of weather will not serve all mens occasions; one needs *Sunshine*, another *Raine*: one condition of life will not fit every man, no more then one suit of apparell will fit every body: Prosperity is not fit for all, nor yet Adversity. If one man be brought low, perhaps he can bear it better, he hath a greater stock of grace, more faith and patience; he can *gather grapes of thornes*, pick some comfort out of the Crosse; every one cannot do this. Another man is seated in an eminent place of dignity; he is fitter for it: perhaps it is a place requires more parts, and judgement, which every one is not capable of; perhaps he can use his estate better, he

* *Ex omni ligno non fit Mercurius.*

48 *The Art of diuine Contentment.*

he hath a publick *heart* as well as a publick *place*. The wise God sees that condition to be bad for one which is good for another; hence it is, he placeth men in different orbes and spheres; some higher, some lower: one man desires *health*, God sees sicknesse better for him; God will worke health out of sicknesse, by bringing the *body of death* into a consumption. Another man desires *liberty* God sees restraint better for him; he will work his liberty by restraint; when his feet are bound, his heart shall be most enlarged. Did we beleewe this, it would give check to the sinfull disputes, and cavills of our hearts; shall I be discontented at that which is enacted by a Decree, and Ordered by a Providence? is this to be a childe, or a rebel?

CHAP.



CHAP. VIII.

USE I.

Shewing how a Christian may make
his life comfortable.

Use I. T shews us how a Christian may come to lead a com- Inform.

fortable life, even an heaven upon
earth; be the times what they will;

by Christian Contentment*; the
comfort of life doth not stand & fall

in having much; its Christ
maxime, Mans life consisteth not in

the abundance of the things which he
doth possess*; but it is in being con-

tented*. Is not the Bee as well con-
tented with feeding on the dew, or

profected

majoris

Hyperius.

E

sucking

Prov. 15.

13

Luk. 12.

15.

Nulla,

sucking from a flower, as the Ox
 that grazeth on the mountaines.
 Contentment lies within a man, in
 the heart: and the way to be com-
 fortable, is not by having our
 barnes filled, but our minde quiet.
 The contented man (saith *Seneca*) is
 the happy man; discontent is a fret-
 ting humor, which dries the braines,
 wastes the spirits, corrodes and eat-
 out the comfort of life. Discon-
 tent makes a man that he doth not
 enjoy what he doth possess. A drop
 or two of vinegar will soure a
 whole glasse of Wine. Lusty man
 have the affluence and continuance of
 worldly comforts, a drop or two of
 discontent will imbitter and poyson
 all. Comfort depends upon Content-
 ment; For as we are halting when the
 sinew upon the hollow of his thigh
 strank; so when the sinew of Con-
 tentment begins to shrink, we go hal-
 ting in our comforts. Contentation
 is as necessary to keep the life com-
 fortable

fortable, as oyl is necessary to keep the lamp burning; the clouds of discontent do often drop the showrs of tears. Would we have comfort in our lives? we may have it if we will *. A Christain may carve out what condition he will to himself *. Why dost thou complain of thy troubles? it is not trouble that troubles, but discontent; it is not the water without the ship, But the water that gets within the leak which drowns it; it is not outward affliction that can make the life of a Christian sad; a contented mind would sail above these waters: but when there's a leak of discontent open, and trouble gets into the heart, then it is disquieted and sinks. Do therefore as the Mariners, pump the water out, and stop this spiritual leak in thy soul, and no trouble can hurt thee.

* *Quisquis est fortuna sue faber. Quid vultis opus est fac ea ipse faciat.*

Seneca



CHAP. IX.

Use II.

A check to the discontented Christian

Use 2. Use II.
Reproof.

* *Quis est tam com-
posita felicitatis, ut
non aliqua ex parte
cum statu sui quali-
tate rixetur?* Boe-
tius de Consolat. Phi-
los. lib. 2.

Here is a just Reproof
to such as are dis-
contented with their condition.

This disease is almost Epidemical. * Some not content
with their callings which
God hath set them in, must
be a step higher, from the
plough to the throne; who
like the spider in the Proverb

will take hold with their hands and
in Kings Palaces, Prov. 30. 28.

* Num. 12. 2. they would be in the Temple of
Honour, before they are in the Tem-
ple of Virtue; who step into Moses

chair

chaire, without *Aaron's* Bells and Pomegranates; like Apples, which do most shew their deformity when they are climbing. Is it not enough that God hath bestowed gifts upon men, in private to edifie, that he hath enriched them with many mercies; but, seek they the Priest-hood also * ? Numb.

What is this but discontent arising from high-flown pride? These do secretly tax the Wildome of God, that he hath not screwed them up in their condition a peg higher. *Ten- Aug.*

in Superbia, ut frangat. Every man is complaining that his estate is no better, though he seldome complains that his heart is no better.

Sic quemque conditionis pœnitet: one man commends this kinde of life, another commends that *; one man thinks a Country-life best, another a City-life, as the Poet elegantly expresseth it.

* *Hic uera-*

que cir-

cumfluus

vitam ce-

libem de-

stet, ille

nuptiis fie-

lix, orbis

filii de-

liber, alius in opibus, alius in heredi, alius in potestate, alius in filiis de-

est, alius in nobilitate, alius in opibus, alius in heredi, alius in potestate, alius in filiis de-

est, alius in nobilitate, alius in opibus, alius in heredi, alius in potestate, alius in filiis de-

est, alius in nobilitate, alius in opibus, alius in heredi, alius in potestate, alius in filiis de-

est, alius in nobilitate, alius in opibus, alius in heredi, alius in potestate, alius in filiis de-

O fortunati mercatores, gravils. annis
Miles ait, Multo jam fractus membris
labore;

Contra Mercator navim jactantibus
austis,

Militia est potior, quid enim concurrunt
tur horis

Memento? cita mors venit, and victo-
ria laeta. Horat.

The Souldier thinks it best to be a
Merchant; and the Merchant to be a
Souldier. Men can be content to be
any thing but what God will have
them. We may cry out with the
same Poet,

Qui sit, Mecenas, ut nemo quam sibi
sortem

Sen ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illi
Contentus vivat? laudet diversa se-
quemes. Hor. 1. Satyr.

How is it that no man is contented?
Very few Christians have learned
Saint

Saint Paul's lesson, neither poor nor rich know how to be content, they can learn any thing but this.

1. If men are poore, they learn to be, 1. *Envious*: they maligne those that are above them. Another's prosperity is an ey-sore. When Gods candle shines upon their neighbours Tabernacle, this light offends them. In the midst of wants men can (in this sense) abound, viz. in envie and malice. An *envious* eye is an evil eye. 2. They learn to be *grumblers*, still complaining, as if God had dealt hardly with them; they are ever telling of their wants, they want this and that comfort; whereas their greatest want is a contented spirit. Those that are well enough content with their *sinnes*, yet are not content with their *condition*.

2. If men are rich, they learn to be *covetous*; thirsting insatiably after the world, and by any unjust

means scraping it together, *their right hand is full of bribes*, as the Psalmist expresseth it*. Put a good cause in one scale, and a piece of Gold in the other, and the Gold weighs heaviest. There are (saith Solomon) four things that say, *It is not enough* *. I may
 *Ps. 26. 10
 *Pro. 30. 15
 adde a fifth, *viz.* the heart of a covetous man. So that neither poor nor rich know how to be content.

Never certainly since the Creation did this sinne of discontent reign, or rather rage, more then in our times, never was God more dishonoured, you can hardly speak with any, but the passion of his tongue betrays the discontent of his heart: every one slips out his trouble, and here even the stammering tongue speaks too freely and fluently.

If we have not what we desire, God shall not have a good look from us, but presently we are sick of discontent, and ready to die out of an humour. If God will not give the
 people

people of Israel for their lusts, they
bid him take their lives; they must
have Quails to their Manna. *Ahab*
though a King (and one would think
his Crown-lands had been sufficient
for him, yet) is fullen, and discon-
tented for want of *Naboths Vine-*
yard. *Jonah* though a good man
and a Prophet, yet ready to die in a
pet*; and because God kill'd his
Gourd, Kill me too, saith he. *Rachel*,
Give me children, or I die, she had ma-
ny blessings, if she could have seene
them, but wanted this of conten-
tation. God will supply our wants;
but must he satisfie our lusts too?
Many are discontented for a very
trifle; another hath a better dresse, a
richer jewell, a newer fashion. *Nero*
not content with his *Empire*, was
troubled that the Musicians had
more skill in playing then he: how
phantastick are some, that pine away
in discontent for the want of
those things, which if they had,
would

*Jonah 4.
8.

would but render them more ridiculous.

CHAP. X.

USE III.

A *suasiva* to Contentment.

Use III
Exhortation.

Use III. **I**T exhorts us to labour for Contentment; this is that which doth beautifie and bespangle a Christian, and as a *spirituall embroidery* doth set him off in the eyes of the world.

Objection.

But me thinks I hear some bitterly complaining, and saying to me, Alas, how is it possible to be contented: the Lord hath made my chains

* Lam. 3. 7. *heavy*; he hath cast me into a very sad condition.

Homer.
Iliad 2.

Answe.

There is no sinne, but labour

The Art of divine Contentment.

labours either to hide it selfe under some mask: or if it cannot be concealed, then to vindicate it selfe by some Apology. This sin of discontent I finde very witty in its Apologies, which I shall first discover, and then make a Reply. We must lay it downe for a Rule, that discontent is a *sinne*, so that all the pretences and Apologies wherewith it labours to justifie it selfe, are but the painting and dressing of a strumpet.

SECT. I.

The first Apology that Discontent makes, Answered.

The first Apology which discontent makes is this; I have lost a childe. *Paulina* upon the losse of her children, was so possessed with a spirit of sadnesse, that she had like to have intombed her self in her own dis-

1. Apology.

discontent; our love to *Relation*
oftentimes more then our love to *Religion*.

1. Reply *Ans.* 1. We must be content
not onely when God gives mercies
but when he taketh them away. If
we must in every thing give thanks.

*1 Thes. 5. 18. then in nothing be dis-
18. contented.

2. Reply 2. Perhaps God hath taken away
the *Cisterne*, that he may give you the
more of the *Spring*; he hath darken-
ed the *Star-light*, that you may
have more *Sun-light*. God intends
you shall have more of himselfe, and
is not he better then *ten Sons*? Look
not so much upon a temporall losse,
as a spirituall gaine; the comforts of
the world runne dregges; those
which come out of the Granary of
the Promise, are purer and
sweeter.

3. Reply 3. Your childe was not given, but
lent. I have, saith *Hanna*, lent my
*1 Sam. 1. son to the Lord. She lent him to the
21. Lord

Lord had but lent him to her: Mercies are not entailed upon us, but lent; what a man lends, he may call for againe when he please. God hath put out a child to thee a while to nurse, wilt thou be displeased if he takes his childe home againe? O be not discontented, that a mercy is taken away from you; but rather be thankfull, that it was lent you so long.

4. Suppose your childe be taken 4. *Reply*,
from you, either he was good or bad; if he was *Rebellious*, you have not so much parted with a childe, as a burden; you grieve for that which might have been a greater griefe to you: if he was *Religious*, then remember, he is taken *from the evil to come**, & plac'd in his centre of felicity. This lower Region is full of grosse and hurtfull vapours; how happy are those who are mounted into the celestiall Orbes! The righteous is taken away; in the Original

* Isa. 57. 1

70N.] * gindall it is, he is gathered; a wicked
 childe dying is cut off, but the pi-
 ous childe is gathered. Even as we
 see men gather flowers, and candi-
 dently, and preserve them by them-
 selfe; so hath God gathered thy child as a
 sweet flower, that he may candely
 with glory, and preserve it by him
 for ever. Why then should a Chri-
 stian be discontented; why should
 he weep excessively? *Daughters of
 Jerusalem, weep not for us, but weep
 for your selves.* So, could we hear
 our children speaking to us out of
 heaven; they would say, Weep not
 for us who are happy; we lie upon a
 soft pillow, even in the bosome of
 Christ; the Prince of Peace is embrac-
 ing us, and kissing us with the kiss
 of his lips; be not troubled at our
 preferment; *Weep not for us,* but
 weep for your selves, who are in a
 sinfull, sorrowfull world: you are in
 the valley of teares, but we are in
 the mountaines of Spices; we are
 gotten

gotten to our harbour, but you are
still tossing upon the waves of incon-
sistency. O Christian, be not discom-
forted that thou hast parted with such a
childe; but rather rejoyce that thou
hadst such a childe to part with.
Break forth into thankfulness. What
honour is it to a Parent to beget
such a childe, that while he liues en-
creaseth the joy of the glorified An-
gels; and when he dies, increaseth
the number of the glorified Saints.

* Luk. 15.

10

Lachryme
penitentiæ
sunt vinū
Angelorū.

B. rn. serm.
30. super.
Cant.

If God hath taken away one of
your children, he hath left you more;
he might have stripped you of all. He
took away all *Jobs* comforts, his
wife, his children; and indeed his
life was left, but as a crosse. Satan
made a bow of this rib (as *Chrysostom*
saies) and shot a temptation by her
at *Job*, thinking to have shot him to
the heart; *Curse God and die*: but
he had upon him the brest-plate
of integrity; and though his chil-
dren were taken away, yet not his
graces,

5. Reply.

Job 2. 9.

graces; still he is content; still he
blesseth God. O thinke how ma-
ny mercies you still enjoy; yet our
base hearts are more discontented at
one losse, then thankfull for an hun-
dred mercies.

God hath plucked one bunch of
Grapes from you, but how many
precious Clusters are left be-
hinde?

Object. " *Object.* But it was my only child,
the staffe of my age, the seed of my
comfort, and the only blossome, out
of which the honour of an ancient
family did grow.

Ans. I. *Ans.* 1. God hath promised you
(if you belong to him) a name, better
then of sons and daughters *; Is he
dead that should have been the mo-
nument to have kept up the name
of a Family? God hath given you
a new name; he hath written your
name in the booke of Life; be-
hold your spirituall Hierarchy; be-
hold a name that cannot be cut off.

2. Hath God taken away thy only childe? he hath given thee his only Son: this is a happy exchange. What needs he complaine of losses that hath Christ, he is his fathers brightnesse*, his riches*, his delight*. * Heb. 1. 3. * Col. 2. 9. * Isa. 43. 1. Is there enough in Christ to delight the heart of God? and is there not enough in him to ravish us with holy delight? He is wisdom to teach us, righteousness to acquit us, sanctification to adorn us; he is *πάρι βασιλέως*, that Royal and Princely gift; he is the bread of Angels*, the joy and triumph of Saints; he is *το πένθος* *παντός*, all in all*; why then art thou discontented? though thy childe be lost, yet thou hast him for whom all things are losse. * *Christus panis angelorum.* Bern. * Col. 3. 10

7. And lastly, let us blush to think that nature should seeme to strip grace. *Pulvillus* an Hea- Pet. Marr. when he was about to consecrate a Temple to *Jupiter*, and news was brought to him of the death of

Hath F his

his sonne, would not desist from his enterprize, but with much composure of minde gave order for decent burial.

S E C T. II.

The second Apology answered.

2. Apology

2. Apology that discontent makes is, I have a great part of my estate strangely melted away, and trading begins to fail.

God is pleased sometimes to bring his children very low, and cut them short in their estate, it fares with them as with that widow who had nothing in her house save a pot of oyle*, but be content.

* 2 King. 4.

1. Reply.

1. God hath taken away your Estate, but not your Portion. This is a sacred Paradox. Honour and Estate are no part of a Christian's Joynture; they are rather accessories than essentials, and are extrinsecal

and forraigne, therefore the losse of these cannot denominate a man miserable, still the portion remains, *The Lord is my portion, saith my soul**. Suppose one were worth a million of money, and he should chance to lose a pin off his sleeve, this is no part of his estate, nor can we say he is undone: the losse of sublunary comforts is not so much to a Christians portion, as the losse of a pin is to a million. *These things shall be added to you**; *Adjicientur*, they shall be cast in as overplus: when a man buyes a piece of cloth, he hath an inch or two given in to the measure; now, though he lose his inch of cloth, yet he is not undone, for still the whole piece remains: our outward estate is not so much in regard of the portion, as an inch of cloth is to the whole piece; why then should a Christian be discontented when the treasure to his spiritual treasure remains? *A thief may take away all my money*

* Lam. 3.

24.

Psal. 16.5.

* Mat. 6.33.

that I have about me, but not my land; still a Christian hath a title to the land of promise. Mary hath chosen the better part which shall not be taken from her.

2. Reply.

* Pecuniam
perdidisti,
fortassis il-
la te perde-
ret, ma-
nus.

2. Perhaps if thy estate had not been lost, thy soule had been lost*, outward comforts do often quench inward heat. God cannot bestow a jewel upon us, but we fall so in love with it, that we forget him that gave it; what pity is it that we should commit idolatry with the creature! God is forc'd sometimes to drain away an estate; the plate and jewels are often cast over board to save the passenger. Many a man may curse the time that ever he had such an estate, it hath been an *enchantment* to draw away his heart from God. Some

* 1 Tim. 6. 9

* Aliud
est esse di-
vitem, a-
liud velle fieri divitem; hic cupiditas accusatur, non

there are that *will be rich**, and they fall into a *snare**. Art thou trou-

Bede.

bled that God hath prevented a
 snare? Riches are *Thornes* * : art ^{*Mat. 13.7}
 thou angry that God hath pull'd a- ^{Spinae sus-}
 way a thorne from thee? Riches are ^{focantes &}
 compar'd to *thick clay* * : Perhaps ^{*Hab. 2.6.}
 thy affections, which are *the feet of the*
soul, might have stuck so fast in this
 golden clay, that they could not have
 ascended up to heaven, be content, if
 God damme up our outward com-
 forts, it is that the streame of our
 love may runne faster another
 way.

3. If your estate be small, yet ^{3. Reply.}
 God can blesse a little. 'Tis not how
 much *money* we have, but how much
 blessing. He that often curseth the
 bags of gold *, can blesse the *meale* * ^{Ex male}
 in the barrel, and the *oyl* in the cruse. ^{Quaestis}
 What if thou hast not the full flesh- ^{vix gaudet}
 pots? yet thou hast a promise, *I will* ^{tertius ha-}
esse her provision *, and then a little * ^{Ps. 132.}
 goes a great way; be content, thou
 hast the dew of a blessing distill'd: a
 shower of green herbes, where love is,

is sweet; I may adde, where the love of God is: another may have more estate then you, but more care; more riches, lesse rest; more renews, but withal more occasions of expence: he hath a greater inheritance, yet perhaps God doth not give him

** Eccl. 6. 2. power to eat thereof **, he hath the dominion of his estate, not the use. he holds more, but enjoys lesse: in a word, thou hast lesse gold then he, perhaps lesse guilt *.

Λεπτός
καλώς ὄν
κρείσσον ἢ
λαμπρῶς
κακῶς.

Menand.

** Lucrum in arca, damnatum in conscientia. Aug. Sermon. Innocent.*

4. Reply. 4. You did never so thrive in your spiritual trade, your heart was never so low as since your condition was low; you were never so poor in spirit, never so rich in faith. You did never runne the wayes of Gods Commandments so fast as since some of your golden weights were taken off. You never had such trade for heaven all your life*; this is

* Felix
mutatio,
ubi Deum
pro mundo
accipimus,
pro terra
caelum.

rim

rimus quæstus. You did never make such adventures upon the promise as since you left off your Sea-adventures. This is the best kinde of merchandize ; O Christian, thou never had'st such incomes of the Spirit, such spring-tides of joy ; and what though weak in estate, if strong in assurance ? be content, what you have lost one way, you have gain'd another.

5. Be your losses what they will in *s. Reply.* this kinde, remember in every losse there is onely a *suffering* ; but in every discontent there is a *sinne*, and one sinne is worse then a thousand sufferings. What ? because some of my *renewals* are gone, shall I part with some of my *righteousnesse* ? shall my faith and patience go too ? because I do not possesse an estate, shall I not therefore possesse my own spirit ? O learn to be content.

S E C T. III.

The third Apology answered.

3. *Apology.* The third Apology is, It is sad with me in my relations; where I should finde most comfort, there I have most grief. This Apology or Objection brancheth it self into two particulars, whereto I shal give a distinct Reply.

1. *Branch.* 1. My child goes on in rebellion; I fear I have brought forth a child for the Devil. It is indeed sad to think
Reply. that hell should be paved with the skulls of any of our children: and certainly the pangs of grief which the mother hath in this kinde are worse then her pangs of travel; but though you ought to be humbled, yet not discontented: for consider

1. *Reply.* You may pick something out of your chilles undutifulnesse; the child

childes sinne is sometimes the Parents Sermon: *quod dolet, docet*: the undutifulnesse of children to us may be a *memento* to put us in minde of our undutifulnesse once to God. Time was when we were rebellious children; how long did our hearts stand out as Garisons against God? how long did he parly with us, and beseech us, ere we would yield? he walked in the tenderness of his heart towards us, but we walked in the forwardnesse of our hearts towards him; and since grace hath been planted in our soules, how much of the wilde Olive is still in us? how many motions of the Spirit do we daily resist? how many unkindneses and affronts have we put upon Christ? Let this open a spring of repentance; look upon your childes rebellion, and mourne for your own rebellion.

2. Though to see him under grieve is 2. *Reply.*
your grieve, yet not alwayes your sinne.

sinne. Hath a Parent given the
 childe, not onely the milke of the
 brest, but *the sincere milke of the*
word * ? Hast thou seasoned his
 tender yeares with Religious educa-
 tion? thou canst do no more; Parents
 can onely worke knowledge, God
 must work grace; they can onely
 lay the wood together, it is God
 must make it burne; a Parent can
 onely be a guide to shew his childe
 the way to heaven, the Spirit of
 God must be a loadestone to draw
 his heart into that way. *Am I in*
Gods stead (saith *Jacob*) *who hath*
withheld the fruit of the womb * ? can
 I give children? So, is a Parent in
 Gods stead to give grace? Who
 can help it, if a childe having the
 light of conscience, Scripture, educa-
 tion, these three Torches in his hand,
 yet run wilfully into the deep ponds
 of sin? Weep for thy childe, pray
 for him; but do not sin for him, by
discontent.

* 1 Pet. 2. 2.

* Gen. 30.
2.

3. Say

3. Say not, you have brought forth a childe for the Devill, God can reduce him; He hath promised to turne the heart of the children to their Parents *, and to open springs of grace in the Desert *; When thy childe is going full-faile to the Devill, God can blow with a contrary winde of his Spirit, and alter his course. When *Paul* was breathing out persecution against the Saints, and was sailing hell-ward, God turns him another way; before he was going to *Damascus*, God sends him to *Ananias*; before a Persecutor, now a Preacher. Though our children are for the present fallen into the *Devills pound*, God can turne them from the power of Satan *, and bring them in at the *twelfth* houre. *Monica* was weeping for her son *Augustine*: at last God gave him in upon prayer, and he became a famous instrument in the Church of God.

* Mal. 4. 6.
* Isa. 35. 6.

* Acts 16.
18.

2. The

3. Say

2. Branch.

2. The second branch of the objection is ; But, my husband takes ill courses; where I looked for honey, behold a sting.

Ans. 'Tis sad to have the living and the dead tied together ; yet, let not your heart fret with discontent ; mourne for his sinne , but do not murmur. For,

1. Reply.

1. God hath placed you in your relation; and you cannot be discontented, but you quarrell with God. What ? for every crosse that befalls us, shall we call the infinite wisdom of God in question ? O the blasphemy of our hearts !

2. Reply.

2. God can make you a gainer by your husbands sinne ; perhaps you had never been so good, if he had not been so bad. The fire burnes hottest in the coldest climate : God often by a divine *Antiperistasis* turnes the sinnes of others to our good, and makes our *maladies* our *medicines*. The more profane the hus-

* Etiam
peccatum
ipsum in
bonum con-
vertit.
Aug. in
Rom. 8.

husband is, oft the more holy the wife growes; the more earthly he is, the more heavenly she growes; God makes sometimes the husbands sin a spur to the wives grace. His exorbitances are *quasi flabellum*, as a paire of bellows to blow up the flame of her zeale and devotion the more.

Is it not thus? doth not thy husbands wickednesse send thee to prayer? Thou perhaps hadst never prayed so much, if he had not sinn'd so much: his deadness quickens thee the more; the stone of his heart is an hammer to break thy heart. The Apostle saith, *The unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband**; but in this sense, the believing wife is sanctified by the unbelieving husband, she growes better; his sinne is a whetstone to her grace, and a *medicine* for her security.

* I Cor. 7.
14.

S E C T. IV.

The fourth Apology Answered.

4. *Apology.* The next Apology that discontent makes, is, But my friends have dealt very unkindly with me, and proved false.

Answ. 'Tis sad when a friend
 Job. 6. 15. proves like a Brooke in Summer;
 The Traveller being parched with heat, comes to the brooke, hoping to refresh himselfe; but the brook is dried up: yet be content.

1. *Reply* 1. You are not alone, others of the Saints have been betrayed by friends; and when they have leaned upon them, they have been as a foot out of joynt. This was true in the Type, David*; It was not an
 *Psal. 55. 12, 13. enemy reproached me, but it was thou, a man, mine equall, my guide and my acquaintance; we tooke sweet counsell together; and in the Antitype, Christ, he

he was betrayed by a friend; and why should we thinke it strange to have the same measure dealt out to us as Jesus Christ had? *The servant is not above his Master.*

2. A Christian may often read his sinne in his punishment; Hath not he dealt treacherously with God? how oft hath he grieved the Comforter, broken his vowes? and through unbelief sided with Satan against God? How oft hath he abused love: taking the Jewells of Gods mercies, and making a golden calfe of them, serving his own lusts? how oft hath he made the free grace of God, which should have been a bolt to keep out sinne, rather a key to open the door to it? these wounds hath the Lord received *in the house of his friend* *. Look upon the unkindnesse of thy friend, and mourne for thy owne unkindnesse against God; shall a Christian condemn that in another, which he allows too much in himself?

2. Reply

* Zach. 13.
6.

3. Hath

3. Reply.

3. Hath thy friend proved treacherous? perhaps you did repose too much confidence in him. If you lay more weight upon an house then the pillars will bear, it must needs break. God saith, *Trust ye not in a friend**; perhaps you did put more trust in him, then you did dare to put in God. Friends are as *Venice-glasses*, we may use them; but if we lean too hard upon them, they will break: Behold matter of humility, but not of sullenness and discontent.

4. Reply.

4. You have a friend in Heaven will never faile you; *There is a friend* (saith Solomon) *that sticketh closer then a brother*. Such a friend is God, he is very studious and inquisitive in our behalfe; he hath a debating with himselfe, a consulting and projecting how he may do us good; he is the *best friend*, which may give contentment in the midst of all discourtesies of friends.

Pro. 18. 24.

Con-

Consider, 1. He is a *loving friend*.
 God is love *, hence he is said some- * 1 Joh. 4.
 times to engrave us on the *Palms of* 16
his hand, Isa. 49. 16. that we may Isa. 49. 16.
 be never out of his eye, and to carry
 us *in his bosome*, Isa. 40. 11. near to Isa. 40. 11
 his heart. There is no stop or
 stint in his love; but as the River
Nilus, it overflows all the banks :
 his love is as far *beyond* our thoughts,
 as it is *above* our deserts. O the
 infinite love of God, in giving the
 Son of his love to be made *flesh* *, *
 which was more then if all the An- *Quantus*
 gels had been made *worms* ! God in *Deus quan-*
 giving Christ to us, gave his very *tillus fa-*
 heart to us; here is love penfill'd out *ctus est ho-*
 in all its glory, and engraven as with *mo? Aug.*
 the *point of a Diamond*. All other
 love is hatred in comparison of the
 love of our friend.

2. He is a *careful friend*; He ca- * 1 Pet. 5. 7
 res for you*.

3. He mindes and transacts our
 business as his own, he accounts his
 G peoples

peoples interests and concernments
as his interest.

2. He provides for us, Graces to
enrich us, Glory to ennoble us; It
was *David's* complaint, *No man cares*

* *Psa. 142. 4* *for my soul*; a Christian hath a friend
that cares for him.

* *Dan. 2. 20* 3. He is a *Prudent* friend *.

friend may sometimes erre through
ignorance or mistake; and give his
friend poison instead of sugar; but

* *Job 9. 4.* *God is wise in heart* *. He is skillful
as well as faithful; he knows what
our disease is, and what Physick is
most proper to apply; he knows
what will do us good; and what
winde will be best to carry us to
heaven.

* *Deur. 7. 9, 10.* 4. He is a *Faithful* friend*; and
he is faithful, 1. In his promises.

In hope of eternal life, which God the Father
* *Tit. 1. 2.* *cannot lie hath promised* *. God

* *Isa. 63. 8.* *people are children that will not lie*
but God is a God that cannot lie
he will not deceive the faith of his

people

people; nay, he cannot: he is called *η ἀληθεια*, *the truth*; he can as well cease to be God, as cease to be true. The Lord may sometimes change his promise, (as when he converts a temporal promise into a spiritual;) but he can never *breake* his promise.

5. He is a *compassionate Friend*.

Hence in Scripture we reade of the *turnings of his bowels**, Gods friend-

* Jer. 31.
20.

ship is nothing else but compassion;

for there is naturally no *affection* in

us to desire his friendship, nor no

goodnesse in us to deserve it; the

bad-stone is in himself. When we

were full of *blood*, he was full of

bowels; When we were enemies,

he sent an *Embassage* of peace;

When our hearts were turned back

from God, his heart was turned

towards us. O the *tenderneffe* and

sympathy of our friend in heaven!

Ye our selves have some *relentings*,

heart to those which are in misery;

but it is God who begets all the mercies and bowels that are in us, therefore he is call'd *the Father of mercies* *.

* 2 Cor 1.3

* Lam. 3. 22

* Dum fueris felix, multos numerabis amicos. Nubila si fuerint temporaria, solus eris.

* 1 Kin. 1.7

* εἰς τὸ τέλος
ἠγάπησέν με.
Job. 13. 1.

6. He is a *constant friend*. His *compassions faile not* *. Friends do often in adversity drop off as leaves in Autumne *. *Amici circa sartaginem*, as *Plutarch* saith; these are rather flatterers than friends. *Joab* was for a time faithful to King *David's* house, he went not after *Absalom's* Treason, but within a while proved false to the Crown, and went after the treason of *Adonijah* *. God is a friend for ever. *Having loved his own* he loved them to the end *. What though I am despised? yet God loves me: What though my friends cast me off? yet God loves me: he loves me, to the end, and there is no end of that love.

This me thinks, in case of discourtesies, and unkindnesses, is enough to charm down discontent.

SECT.

SECT. V.

The fifth Apology answered.

The next Apology is, I am under great reproaches*. Let not this discontent; For,

1. It is a sign there is some good in thee; *Quid mali feci?* saith *Socrates*; what evil have I done, that this bad man commends me? The applause of the wicked usually denotes some evil, and their *censure* imports some good*. *David* wept and fasted, and that was turned to his reproach*; as we must passe to heaven through the pikes of suffering, so through the clouds of Reproach.

2. If your reproach be for God, as *David* was, *For thy sake I have borne reproach**; then it is rather matter of triumph then dejection: Christ doth not say, when you are

S. Apology.
Deterio.

res sunt
qui famam
corrumpunt
quàm qui
prædia di-
rapiunt.

Greg.

1. Reply.

*Ps. 38. 20

*Ps. 69. 10

2. Reply.

*Ps. 69. 7

but it is God who begets all the mercies and bowels that are in us, therefore he is call'd *the Father of mercies* *.

* 2 Cor 1. 3

* Lam. 3. 22

* Dum fueris felix, multos numerabis amicos. Nubila si fuerint temporaria, solus eris.

* 1 Kin. 1. 7

* εἰς τέλος ἡσυχίασεν.
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§. Apology.
Deterio-

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ripiunt.

Greg.

1. Reply.

*Ps. 38. 20

*Ps. 69. 10

2. Reply.

*Ps. 69. 7

reproached, be discontented; but
 *Mat. 5. 12 *χαίετε, Rejoyce* *. Weare your Re-
 proach as a Diadem of honour,
 for now a Spirit of glory rests upon
 * 1 Pet. 4. 14 you *. Put your reproaches into the
 inventory of your riches; so did
 * Heb. 11. 26 Moses *. It should be a Christians
 ambition to wear his Saviours livery,
 though it be sprinkled with blood,
 and sullied with disgrace

3. Reply. 3. God will do us good by re-
 * Boni per reproach *, as David said of Shimei his
 contumeli- cursing, It may be the Lord will re-
 as meliores quite good for his cursing this day *, this
 existunt. puts us upon searching out sinne. A
 Gregor. in child of God labours to reade his sin
 Hom. in every stone of reproach that is
 * 2 Sam. 16. 12 cast at him; besides, now we have
 3. De tra- an opportunity to exercise patience
 ctione pati- and humility *.
 entia no-
 stra proba-
 tur. Aug.
 lib. 3. con-
 tra Petil.

4. Reply. 4. Jesus Christ was content to be
 * Heb. 12. 1 reproached for us; He despised the
 shame of the Crosse *. It may amaze
 us to think, that he who was God
 could endure to be spit upon, to be
 crowned

cro
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 of gl
 us.
 have
 let no
 let us
 head.

but crowned with thornes, *in a kinde of*
Re- jeere; and when he was ready to
ur, bow his head upon the Crosse, to have
upon the Jewes in scorn *wag* their head,
the and say, *He saved others, himself*
did he cannot save. The shame of the
tians Crosse was as much as the *blood* of
very, the Crosse; His Name was cruci-
ood, fied before his Body. The sharp
y re- arrows of *Reproach* that the world
oes his did shoot at Christ, went deeper in-
ill re- to his heart then the spear; His suf-
*; this fering was so ignominious, that as
ne. A if the Sunne did blush to behold, it
his fin withdrew its bright beams, and mas-
that is qued it selfe with a cloud; (and well
e have it might, when the Sun of righte-
atience onnesse was in an eclipse;) all this
contumely and reproach did the God
of glory endure, or rather *despise* for
us. Oh then, let us be content to
have our names eclipsed for Christ;
let not reproach lie at our heart, but
let us binde it as a crown about our
head. Alas, what is reproach? this
G 4 is

is but *small shot*, how will men stand in the mouth of the Canon: those who are discontented at a reproach, will be offended at a fag-got.

5. *Reply.* 5. Is not many a man contented to suffer reproach for maintaining his lust? and shall not we for maintaining the truth? Some glory in *that which is their shame*: and shall we be ashamed of that which is our glory? Be not troubled at these petty things: he whose heart is once divinely touched with the loadstone of Gods Spirit, doth account it his honour to be dishonoured for *Christ*; and doth as much despise the worlds censure, as he doth their praise.

6. *Reply.* 6. We live in an Age, wherein men dare reproach God himselfe. The *Divinity* of the Sonne of God is blasphemously reproached by the *Socinian*; The blessed *Bible* is reproached by the *Antiscripturist*, as

it were but a *legend of lies*, and every mans faith a fable; The *Justice* of God is called to the barre of Reason by the *Arminian*; The *Wisdom* of God in his providentiall actings, is taxed by the *Atheist*; The *Ordinances* of God are decryed by the *Familiſt*, as being too heavy a burden for a *free-borne* conscience; and too low, and carnall for a sublime Seraphique spirit; The *Wayes* of God which have the Majesty of holineſſe shining in them, are calumniated by the *Profane*; The mouthes of men are open againſt God, as if he were an *hard Maſter*, and the path of Religion too ſtrict and ſevere; If men cannot give God a good word, ſhall we be diſcontented or troubled, that they ſpeak hardly of us? ſuch as labour to bury the glory of Religion, ſhal we wonder that their throats are *open ſepulchres**, to bury our good name? Oh let us be contented while we are in Gods ſcouring houſe,

* Rom. 3.
31.

to have our names sullied a little; the blacker we seeme to be here, the brighter shall wee shine when God hath set us upon the celestiall shelve.

S E C T. VI.

The sixth Apology answered.

- 6. Apology.* The sixth Apology that Discontent makes, is disrespect in the world. I have not that esteem from men as is suitable to my quality and graces. And doth this trouble? Consider,
- 1. Reply* 1. The world is an unequall Judge, as it is full of *change*, so of *partiality*. The world gives her *Respects* as she doth her *places of preferment*; more by favour often, then desert. Hast thou the ground of reall worth in thee? that is best. Worth is in him that *hath it*; Honour is in him that *gives it**: better deserve respect, and
- *Honor est in honorante.*

and not have it; then have it, and not deserve it.

2. Hast thou grace? God respects thee, and his judgement is best worth prizing. A Beleever is a person of honour, being borne of God. Since thou wast precious in mine eyes; thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee *. Let the world think what they will of you; perhaps in their eyes you are a cast-away; in Gods eyes a Dove *, a Spouse *, a Jewel *: others account you the dregs & off-scouring of the world *, but God will give whole Kingdomes for your ransom *. Let this content; no matter with what oblique eyes I am looked upon in the world; if I am *rectus in curia*, God thinks well of me. 'Tis better that God approve, then man applaud. The world may put us in their Rubrick, and God put us in his black-book. What is a man the better that his fellow-prisoners commend him, if his Judge condemne him?

2. Reply!

* Isa. 43. 4.

* Cant. 2. 14.

* Cant. 5. 1

* Mal. 3. 17

* 1 Cor. 4. 14

* Isa. 43. 5.

him? Oh labour to keepe in with God, prize his love: let my fellow subjects frowne; I am contented being a favorite of the King of heaven.

3. Reply. 3. If we are the children of God we must look for disrespect; a believer is *in* the world, but not *of* the world: we are here in a pilgrim condition, out of our own Countrey therefore must not look for respects and acclamations of the world: it is sufficient that we shall have honour in our own Countrey *; T
- * Heb 13. 14. dangerous to be the worlds favorite.

4. Reply. 4. Discontent arising from disrespect, favours too much of pride: an humble Christian hath a lower opinion of himselfe then others can have of him. He that is taken up above the thoughts of his sins, and how he hath provoked God, he cries out
- * Prov. 30. Agur, I am more brutish then a man*; and therefore is contented though

though he be set *among the Dogs of the flock* *. Though he be low in the thoughts of others, yet he is thankfull, that he is not laid in the *lowest hell* *. A proud man sets an high value upon himselfe, and is angry with others, because they wil not come up to his price. Take heed of pride; O had others a window to look into thy brest, (as *Crates* once expressed it), or did thy heart stand where thy face doth; thou would'st wonder to have so much respect.

SECT. VII.

The seventh Apology answered.

The next Apology is, I meet with very great sufferings for the truth *. Consider

7. Apology.

* *Scala aurea ad cor-
lum, sed*

1. Your sufferings are not so great as your sinnes. Put these two in the balance, and see which weighs heaviest

*circum-
septa gla-
diis.*

1. Reply.

vieft; where finne lies heavie, sufferings lie light. A carnall spirit makes more of his sufferings, and lesse of his finnes; he looks upon one at the great end of the Perspective, but upon the other at the little end of the Perspective. The carnall heart cries out, Take away the *Frogs*; but a gracious heart cries, Take away the *iniquity* *. The one saith, never any one suffered as I have done; but the other saith, Never any one *sinned* as I have done*.

* 2 Sam.
24.10.

* Mica. 7.9

2. Reply.

2. Art thou under sufferings? thou hast an opportunity to shew the valour and constancy of thy minde; some of Gods Saints would have accounted it a great favour to have been honoured with martyrdom. One said, I am in prison *till* I am in prison; thou countest that a trouble which others would have worn as an ensigne of their glory.

3. Reply.

3. Even those who have gone onely upon morall principles, have shewn

shewn much constancy and contentment in their sufferings. *Curtius* being bravely mounted, and in armour, threw himselfe into a great gulfe, that the City of *Rome* might according to the Oracle be delivered from the Pestilence; and we having a Divine Oracle, that they who kill the body cannot hurt the soul, shall we not with much constancy and patience devote our selves to injuries for Religion, and rather suffer for the truth, then the truth suffer by us? The *Decii* among the Romans vowed themselves to death, that their legions and souldiers might be crowned with the honour of the victory. O what should we be content to suffer to make the truth victorious! *Regulus* * having sworne that he would returne to *Carthage* (though he knew there was a furnace heating for him there) yet not daring to infringe his oath, he did adventure to go; we then who are Christians, having made a vow

* Pet.
Mart.

a vow to Christ in Baptism, and so, renewed it in the blessed Sacrament, should with much contentation rather choose to suffer, then violate our sacred oath. Thus the blessed Martyrs, with what courage and chearfulness did they yield up their souls to God? and when the fire was set to their bodies, yet their spirits were not at all fired with passion or discontent. Though others hurt the *body*, let them not the *minde* through discontent; shew by your heroick courage that you are above those troubles which you cannot be without.

S E C T. VIII.

The eight Apology answered.

8. Apology. The next Apology is, The prosperity of the wicked. *Ans.* I confesse 'tis so often, that the evill enjoy
all

all the good, and the good endure all the evil. *David*, though a good man, stumbled at this, and had like to have fallen *; well, be contented, * *Pl. 73. 2.* for remember,

1. These are not the only things, 1. *Reply.* nor the best things, they are mercies without the pale; these are but acorns with which God feeds swine; you who are believers, have more choice fruit, the *Olive*, the *Pomegranate*, the fruit which grows on the true *Vine* *Jesus Christ*; others have the fat of the earth, you have the dew of heaven; they have a South-land, you have those springs of living water which are clarified with *Christs blood*, and indulgerated with his love.

2. To see the wicked flourish is 2. *Reply.* matter rather of pity than envy; 'Tis all the heaven they must have. *Wo* to you rich men, for you have received your consolation*. Hence it was that *David* made it his solemn prayer, Deliver me from the wicked, from men *Psa. 17. 14*
H of

of the world, which have their portion
 in this life, and whose belly thou fillest
 with thy hid treasure, Psal. 17.
 The words (methinks) are David's
Letany; from men of the world
 which have their portion in this life
Good Lord deliver me. When the
 wicked have eaten of their dainties
 dishes, there comes in a sad reckoning
 which will spoile all. The world
 is first *musical*, and then *tragical*.
 you would have a man fry, and burn
 in hell; let him have enough of the
fat of the earth. O remember, for
 every sand of mercy that runs out to
 the wicked, God puts a drop of wrath
 into his Vial. Therefore as that souldier
 said to his fellow, Do you envy
 me my grapes? they cost me dear,
 I must die for them; So I say, Do
 you envy the wicked? alas, their
 prosperity is like *Hamans* banquet
 before execution. If a man were
 to be hanged, would one envy to see
 him walk to the gallows through
 pleasa

pleasant fields and fine galleries; or to see him go up the ladder in cloth of gold? The wicked may flourish in their bravery a while; but, when they flourish as the grasse it is, that they shall be destroyed for ever*. This proud grasse shall be mowen down. What-
ever a sinner enjoys, he hath a curse with it*; and shall we envy? What if
poisoned bread be given to dogs? The long furrowes in the backs of the godly have a seed of blessing in them; when the table of the wicked becomes a snare, and their honour their halter.

* Psal. 92. 7

* Mal. 2. 2.

SECT. IX.

The ninth Apology answered.

9. The next Apology that discontent makes for it self, is *the evils of the times*. The times are full of Heresie and Impiety, and this is that which troubles me. This Apology

9. Ap. 10. 3.

consists of two branches, to which I shall answer in *specie*; and

I. Branch.
The heresie of the times.

I. The times are full of Heresie. This is indeed sad, when the Devil cannot by violence destroy the Church, he endeavours to poison it, when he cannot with *Samsons* Fox-tailes set the corne on fire, then he sowes tares, as he labours to destroy the peace of the Church by *Division*, so the truth of it by *Errour*; we may cry out with *Seneca*, *Verè vivimus in temporum facibus*, we live in times wherein there is a fluce open to all novel opinions, and every mans *opinion* is his *Bible*. Well, this may make us mourne, but let us not murmur through discontent: Consider,

I. Reply.

I. Errour makes a discovery of men,

I.

I. *Bad men*; Errour discovers such as are tainted and corrupt. When the Leprosie brake forth in the forehead, then was the *Lepex* discovered.

Errour

Errour is a spiritual Bastard; the devil is the father, and pride the mother; you never knew an erroneous man; but he was a proud man: now, it is good that such men should be laid open, to the intent, first, that Gods righteous judgements upon them may be adored *; Secondly, that others who are free be not infected. If a man hath the plague, it is well it breaks forth; for my part, I would avoid an Heretick as I would avoid the devil, for he is sent on his errand. I appeale to you, if there were a Taverne in this City, where under a pretence of selling wine, many hogshheads of poison were to be sold, were it not well that others should know of it that they might not buy? it is good that those who have poisoned opinions should be known, that the people of God may not come near either the sent, or taste of that poison.

2. Errour is a *Touchstone* to disco-

H 3

ver

* 2 Theſ. 2.
12

2.

* I Cor.
11. 11.

vor good men, it tries the gold, *There must be Heresies, that they which are* *doxipol*, approved, may be made manifest*. Thus our love to Christ and zeale for truth doth appear. God shewes who are the living fish, viz. such as swim against the stream, who are the sound sheep, viz. such as feed in the green pastures of the Ordinances; who are the Doves, viz. such as live in the best aire, where the Spirit breaths; God sets a Garland of honour upon these, *These are they*

* Rev. 7. 14 *which came out of great tribulation**

So, these are they that have opposed the Errours of the times; these are they that have preserved the virginity of their conscience; who have kept their judgement sound, and their heart iost. God will have a Trophy of honour set upon some of his Saints, they shall be renowned for their sincerity, being like the Cypressse, *qua viriditatem in hyeme non*

* Ambrosio. *amittit**, which keeps its greenesse and

and freshnesse in the winter-season.

2. Be not sinfully discontented, 2. Reply
for God can make the errours of the Church advantageous to truth. Thus the truths of God have come to be more beaten out and confirmed; as it is in *Law*, one man laying a false title to a piece of land, the true title hath by this meanes beene the more searched into & ratified: some had never so studied to defend the truth by *Scripture*, if others had not endeavoured to overthrow it by *Sophistry*; all the mists and fogs of Error that have risen out of the bottomless pit, have made the glorious Sun of truth to shine so much the brighter. Had not *Arius* and *Sabellius* broached their damnable Errours, the truth of those questions about the blessed *Trinity* had never been so discussed and defended by *Athanasius*, *Augustine*, and others; had not the devil brought in so much of his

princely darknesse, the Champions for Truth had never runne so fast to Scripture to light their Lamps. So that God who hath a *whee*le within a *whee*le, over-rules these things wisely, and turns them to the best. Truth is an heavenly plant that settles by shaking.

3. Reply.

*Etiam val-
menta auri
preciosa.*

3. God raiseth the price of his truth the more; the very shreds and filings of truth are venerable. When there is much counterfeit metal abroad, we prize the true Gold the more: the pure wine of truth is never more precious then when unsound doctrines are broached and vented.

4. Reply.

4. Errour makes us more thankful to God for the jewel of Truth. When you see another infected with the Plague, how thankful are you, that God hath freed you from the infection? when we see others have the *Leprosie in the head*, how thankful are we to God that he hath not
given

given us over to believe a lie, and so be damned? It is a good use that may be made even of the Error of the times, when it makes us more humble and thankful, adoring the free grace of God who hath kept us from drinking of that deadly poison.

2. The second Branch of the Apology that discontent makes, is the *scarcity of the times*. I live and converse among the profane, *O that I had wings like a Dove, that I might fly away and be at rest** ! Answ. It is * Pl. 55. 6. indeed sad to be mixed with the wicked, David beheld the transgressors, & was grieved*; and Lot, (who was a * Pl. 119. 158. bright Starre in a dark night) was vexed, or as the word in the Original may beare, *wearied out**, * κατὰ τὴν ἀσέλειαν ἐν ἀσελγείᾳ ἀναστροφῆς, νύμω. with the unclean conversation of the wicked*; he made the sinnes of *Sodom* spears to pierce his own soul; we ought (if there be any spark of divine love in us) to be very sensible of the

the sinnes of others, and our hearts bleed for them; yet let us not break forth in murmuring or discontent, knowing that God in his providence hath permitted it, and surely not without some reasons. For,

1. *Reply.* 1. The Lord makes the wicked an hedge to defend the godly; the wise God often makes those who are wicked and peaceable, a means to safeguard his people from those who are wicked and cruell. The King of Babylon kept *Jeremy*, and gave speciall order for his looking to, that he did want nothing.
- * Jer. 39.
11, 12. God sometimes makes *brassen sinners* to be *brassen walls* to defend his people.

2. *Reply.* 2. God doth interline & mingle the wicked with the godly, that the godly may be a means to save the wicked; such is the beauty of holinesse, that it hath a magnetical force in it to allure and draw even the wicked. Some

times

Sometimes God makes a believing husband a means to convert an unbelieving wife, and *è contrà*. *What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?* * 1 Cor 7.

16.

The godly living among the wicked, by their prudent advice, and pious example have won them to the embracing of Religion; if there were not some godly among the wicked, how in a probable way, without a miracle, can we imagine that the wicked should be converted? Those who are now shining Saints in Heaven, sometimes *served divers lusts* *. *Paul* * Tit. 3.3. once a persecutor; *Augustine* once a Manichee; *Luther* once a Monk, but by the severe and holy carriage of the godly, were converted to the faith.

Sect.

S E C T. X.

*The tenth Apology answered.*10.
Apology.

The next Apology that Discontent makes, is lownesse of parts, and gifts.

I cannot, saith the Christian, discourse with that fluency, nor pray with that elegancy as others.

1. *Reply.*

Answ. I. *Grace is beyond gifts.* Thou comparest thy grace with others gifts, there is a vast difference. Grace without gifts is infinitely better then gifts without grace; in Religion, the vitals are better then the intellectuals: Gifts are a more extrinsecall and common work of the Spirit, which is incident to reprobrates; grace is a more distinguishing work, and is a jewell hung onely upon the Elect. Hast thou the *seed of God*, the *holy anointing*? be content.

I. Tho

I. Thou sayest, thou canst not discourse with that fluency as others.

Ans. Experiments in Religion are beyond notions, and *impressions* beyond expressions. *Judas* (no doubt) could make a learned discourse of Christ; but wofare the woman in the Gospel, that felt vertue coming out of him *. A sanctified heart is better then a silver tongue. There is as much difference between gifts and grace as between a Tulip painted on the wall, and one growing in the Garden.

Luk. 8.

47.

II. Thou sayest, thou canst not pray with that elegancy as others.

Ans. Prayer is a matter more of the heart then the head. In prayer it is not so much *fluency* prevailes, as *feruency* *. nor is God so much taken with the elegancy of speech, as the efficacy of the Spirit. Humility is better then volubility; here the *solitary* is the *orator*, sighes and groanes are the best Rhetorique.

Jam. 5.

16

ἐν σπείρῳ

ἐργασμένη.

Thou

2. Be

2. Reply. 2. Be not discontented ; For God doth usually proportion a mans parts to the place where he calls him. Some are set in an higher sphere and function, their place requires more parts and abilities ; but the most inferior member is useful in its place, and shall have a power delegated for the discharge of its peculiar office.

S E C T. XI.

The eleventh Apology answered.

11. Apology.

The next Apology is, *The trouble of the Church.* Alas, my disquiet and discontent is not so much for my self, as the publick. The Church of God suffers.

Ans. I confesse it is sad, and we ought for this to hang our harps upon the Willows * ; he is a wooden leg in Christs body, that is not sensible of the state of the body. As a Christian

must

must not be proud flesh, so neither dead flesh. When the Church of God suffers, he must sympathize; *Jeremy wept for the Virgin daughter of Sion.* We must feel our brethrens hard cords through our soft beds; in Musick, if one string be touched, all the rest sound; when God strikes upon our brethren, our bowels must sound as an Harp*; be *Isa. 16. 11 sensible, but do not give way to discontent. For consider,

1. *God sits at the sterne of his Church**; Sometimes it is as a ship tossed upon the waves, *O then afflicted and tossed**: but cannot God bring this ship to haven, though it meet with a storme upon the Sea? The ship in the Gospel was tossed, because sinne was in it; but it was not overwhelmed, because Christ was in it. Christ is in the Ship of his Church fear not sinking; The Churches Anchor is cast in Heaven. Do not we think God loves his Church,

I. Reply.
* Ps. 46. 5.

* Isa. 54. 12

Church, and takes as much care of it as we can? The names of the twelve Tribes were on *Aaron's breast*, signifying how near to Gods heart his people are; They are his *portion**, and shall that be lost? His *glory**, and shall that be finally eclipsed? No certainly. God can deliver his Church, not only *from*, but *by* opposition; the Churches pangs shall help forward her deliverance.

*Deut. 32.

9.

*Is. 46. 13.

2. *Repl.*

**sanguine
fundata est
siccata est,
sanguine
crevit.*

2. *God hath alwayes propagated Religion by sufferings.* The foundation of the Church hath been laid in *blood**, and these sanguine showtes have ever made it more fruitful. *Cain* put the knife to *Abels* throat, and ever since, the Churches veins have bled; but she is like the *Vine*, which by bleeding growes; and like the *Palm tree*, which may have this motto, *Pecussa resurgit*; the more weight is laid upon it; the higher it riseth. The holiness and patience of the
Saints

Saints under their persecutions, hath much added both to the growth of Religion, and the Crown. *Basil*, and *Tertal*. observe of the Primitive Martyrs, that divers of the Heathens seeing their zeale and constancy, turned Christians. Religion is that *Phoenix* which hath alwayes revived and flourished in the ashes of holy men. *Isaiah* sawen asunder; *Peter* crucified at *Ferusalem* with his head downwards*; *Cyprian* Bishop of Car- * *Euseb.*
thage, *Polycarp* of *Smyrna*, both martyred for Religion, yet evermore the Truth hath been sealed most by blood, and gloriously dispersed; whereupon *Julian* did forbear to persecute, *non ex clementia, sed invidia*; not out of pittie, but envy; because the Church grew so fast, and multiplied, as *Naxianzen* well observes.

S E C T. XII.

*The twelfth Apology Answered.*12. *Apology.*

The twelfth Apology that Discontent makes for it selfe, is this: It is not my trouble that troubles me, but it is my *sins* that do disquiet and discontent.

Ans. Be sure it be so; do not prevaricate with God and thy own soule, in true mourning for sinne when the present suffering is removed, yet the sorrow is not removed, but suppose the Apology be real, and *sin* is the ground of your discontent. Yet I answer, a mans disquiet about sin, may be *beyond its bounds* in these three cases.

1. *Reply.*

10.
Dolor exa-
nimans.

1. When it is *disheartning*, that is, when it sets up sin above mercy. If Israel had onely pored upon their *sins*, and not looked up to the
brazen

brazen Serpent, they had never been healed. That sorrow for sin which drives us away from God, is not without sinne, for there is more *despair* in it then *remorse*. The soule hath so many teares in its eyes, that it cannot see Christ. Sorrow as sorrow doth not save (that were to make a Christ of our teares,) but is useful as its preparatory in the soule, making sinne *vile*, and Christ *precious*. Oh look up to the Brazen Serpent, the Lord Jesus; a sight of his blood will revive, the medicine of his *merits* is broader then our sore.

It is Satans policy, either to keep us from seeing our finnes; or if we will needs see them, that we may be *swallowed up of sorrow**, either he would *stupifie* us, or *affright* us; either keep the glasse of the Law from our eyes, or else pensil out our sins in such Crimson colours, that we may sink in the *quick-sands* of despair.

* 2 Cor. 27

2.
Dolor im-
pediens.

2. When sorrow is *indisposing*, it untunes the heart for prayer, meditation, holy conference; it cloisters up the soule. This is not *sorrow*, but rather *sullenness*; and doth render a man not so much *Penitential*, as *Cynical*.

3.
Dolor in-
tempestivus

3. When it is *out of season*, God bids us *rejoyce*, and we *hang our heads upon the Willows*; he bids us *trudge*, and we cast our selves down, and are brought even to the margin of *despaire*. If Satan cannot keep us from mourning, he will be sure to put us upon it when it is least in *season*.

When God calls us in a special manner to be thankful for mercy, and put on our white robes, then Satan will be putting us into *mourning*; and instead of a garment of praise, cloath us with a *spirit of heaviness*; so God loseth the acknowledgement of a mercy, and we the comfort.

If thy sorrow hath tuned and fitted thee for Christ, if it hath raised in thee high prizings of him, strong hungerings after him, sweet delight in him; this is as much as God requires, and a Christian doth but sin to vex and torture himselfe further upon the wrack of his own discontent.

And thus I hope I have answered the most materiall Objections, and Apologies which this sinne of Discontent doth make for it selfe. I see no reason why a Christian should be discontented, unlesse for his Discontent. Let me in the next place propound something which may be both as a loadstone and a whetstone to Contentation.

CHAP. XI.

Divine Motives to Contentment.

AND so I proceed to the Arguments, or Motives that may quicken to Contentment.

S E C T. I.

The first Argument to Contentment.

The first
Argument
to Con-
tentation.

I. Consider the excellency of Contentment is a flower that doth not grow in every garden; it teacheth a man how in the midst of want to abound. You would think it were excellent, if I could prescribe a receipt, or antidote against poverty;

but behold, here is that which is more excellent; for a man to want, and yet have enough, this alone contentment of spirit brings. Contentation is *πανταρπακτον*, a remedy against all our troubles, a *levamen* to all our burdens, it is the cure of care. Contentation, though it be not properly a *Grace*, (it is rather a *disposition of mind*;) yet in it there is *optimum temperamentum*, an happy temperature and mixture of all the graces: It is a most precious compound which is made up of *Faith, Patience, Meeknesse, &c.* which are the ingredients put into it. Now there are *in specie* these seven rare excellencies in Contentment.

I. A contented Christian carries *1. Excellency of Contentation.* heaven about him; For what is Heaven but that sweet repose and full contentment that the soule shall have in God: in Contentment there is the *first* fruits of Heaven.

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heaven about him; For what is Heaven but that sweet repose and full contentment that the soule shall have in God: in Contentment there is the *first* fruits of Heaven.

There are two things in a contented spirit which makes it like Heaven,

1. *God is there*; Something of God is to be seen in that heart. A discontented Christian is like a rough tempestuous sea; when the water is rough, you can see nothing there; but when it is smooth & serene, then you may behold your face in the water*: When the heart rageth¹⁹ through discontent, it is like a rough Sea; you can see nothing there, unless passion and murmuring; there is nothing of God, nothing of heaven in that heart; but by virtue of Contentment, 'tis like the Sea when it is smooth and calm, there is *a face shining there*; you may see something of Christ in that heart, a representation of all the graces.

2. *Rest is there*. O what a Sabbath is kept in a contented heart! What an Heaven! A contented Christian is like *Noah* in the Ark though

though the Arke were tossed with waves, *Noah* could sit and sing in the Arke. The soule that is gotten into the Arke of Contentment, sits quiet, and sailes above all the waves of trouble; he can sing in this spiritual Arke; The wheeles of the Chariot move, but the axle-tree stirs not; the circumference of the Heavens is carried about the Earth, but the Earth moves not out of its centre. When we meete with motion and change in the creatures round about us, a contented spirit is not stirred or moved out of its centre. The sailes of a mill move with the winde, but the mill it self stands still; An embleme of contentment: When our outward estate moves with the wind of providence, yet the heart is settled through holy Contentment; and when others are like quick-silver shaking and trembling through disquiet, the contented spirit can say as *David*, *O God, my heart is fixed,*
my

* Pl. 57.7. *my heart is fixed* ; what is this but a piece of heaven ?

2. Excel-
lencie.

2. Whatever is defective in the creature, is *made up in Contentment*. A Christian may want the comforts that others have, the land, and possessions ; but God hath distilled into his heart that Contentment which is far better ; In this sense that is true of our Saviour, *He shall have in this life an hundred fold* *. Perhaps he
29 that ventured all for Christ, never hath his house or land again ; I, but God gives him a *contented spirit* ; and this breeds such joy in the soule, as is infinitely sweeter then all his houses and lands which he left for Christ. It was said with *David* in regard of his outward comforts ; he being driven (as some thinke) from his Kingdome ; yet in regard of that sweet contentment he found in God, he had more comfort then men use to have in time of harvest
* Pl. 4.7. *and vintage* *. One man hath house
and

and lands to live upon, another hath nothing, only a small trade; yet even that brings in a livelihood. A Christian may have little in the world, but he drives the trade of contentment; and so he knowes as well how to want, as to abound. O the rare art, or rather miracle of contentment! Wicked men are often disquered in the enjoyment of all things; the contented Christian is well in the want of all things.

Quest. But how comes a Christian into to be contented in the deficiency of outward comforts? *Quest.*

Answ. A Christian findes contentment distilled out of the breasts of the Promises. He is poor in purse, but rich in Promise. There is one promise brings much sweet contentment into the soul; *They that seeke the Lord, shall not want any good thing* * *Ps 34.10.* If the thing we desire be good for us, we shall have it; if it be not good, then the not having it is good.

good for us. The resting satisfied with this Promise, gives contentment.

3. *Excellency.*

3. Contentment makes a man in tune to serve God; it oiles the wheels of the soul, and makes it more agil & nimble; it composeth the heart, and now is fit for prayer, meditation, &c. How can he that is in a passion of grief, or discontent, *serve God without distraction**? Contentment doth prepare and tune the heart. First you prepare the Viol, and winde up the strings, ere you play a fit of musick. When a Christians heart is wound up to this heavenly frame of Contentment, then it is fit for duty. A discontented Christian is like *Saul* when the *evil spirit* came upon him. O what jarrings and discords doth he make in prayer! When an Army is put into a disorder, now it is not fit for battell: When the thoughts are scattered and distracted about the cares of this life, a man is not

* 1 Cor. 7.
35

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not fit for devotion. Discontent takes the heart wholly off from God, and fixeth it upon the present trouble, so that a mans mind is not upon his *prayer*, but upon his *crosse*.

Discontent doth disjoynt the soul, and it is impossible now that a Christian should go so steadily, and chearfully in Gods service. O how lame is his devotion! The discontented person gives God but *halfe* a duty, his Religion is nothing but *bodily exercise*, it wants a soul to animate it. *David* would not offer that to God which *cost him nothing**; where there ^{*2 Sam. 24.} is too much worldly *care*, there is too ^{24.} little spiritual *cost* in a duty. The discontented person doth his duties by *halves*; he is just like *Ephraim*, a *cake not turned**; he is a cake baked ^{* Hos. 7. 8.} on one side; he gives God the *outside*, but not the spirituall part, his heart is not in duty; he is baked on one side, but the other side dough; and •

and what profit is there of such raw, indigested services? He that gives God only the skin of worship, what can he expect more then the shell of comfort? Contentation brings the heart into frame; and then only do we give God the flower and spirits of a duty, when the soule is composed; now a Christian doth *remasgere*, his heart is intense and serious. There are some duties which we cannot performe as we ought without Contentment. As,

1. *To rejoyce in God.* How can he rejoyce that is discontented? he is fitter for *Repining* then *Rejoycing*.

2. *To be thankful for mercie.* Can a discontented person be thankfull? he can be fretful, not thankful.

*Ez 9.23. 3. *To justifie God in his proceedings**, How can he doe this who is discontented with his condicion? He will sooner censure Gods wisdom, then cleare

deare his justice. Oh then how excellent is *Contentation*, which doth prepare, and as it were string the heart for duty? Indeed *Contentment* doth not only make our duties lively and agil, but *acceptable*. 'Tis this that puts beauty and worth into them; for *Contentment* *settles* the soul: Now as it is with *milke*, when it is alwaies stirring, you can make nothing of it, but let it settle a while and then it turnes to cream: When the heart is overmuch stirred with disquiet and discontent, you can make nothing of those duties; how thin, how flotten, & jejune are they? But when the heart is once settled by holy *Contentment*, now there is some worth in our duties, now they turn to cream.

4. *Contentment* is the spirituall Arch, or pillar of the soule; it fits a man to *bear burdens*; he whose heart is ready to sink under the least sin, by vertue of this hath a spirit invincible

4. *Excellencie.*

cible under sufferings. A contented Christian is like the Camomile, the more it is troden upon, the more it growes; as Phyfick works disease out of the body, so doth contentment work trouble out of the heart. Thus it argues; If I am under reproach, God can vindicate me; If I am in want, God can relieve me. *Ye shall not see wind, nor raine;*

* 2 King. 3. *the valley shall be filled with water.*

17 Thus holy Contentment keeps the heart from fainting; in the *Autumne* when the fruit and leaves are blown off, still there is sap in the roots. When there is an *autumne* upon our external felicity, the leaves of our estate drop off, still there is the sap of Contentment in the heart; and a Christian hath life inwardly, when his outward comforts do not blos-some. The contented heart is never out of heart. Contentation is a golden shield, that doth beat back discouragements. *Humility* is like the lead

to the net, which keeps the soule down when it is rising through passion; and *Contentment* is like the cork which keeps the heart up when it is sinking through discouragement. *Contentment* is the great underprop; it is like the *Beame* which bears whatever weight is laid upon it; nay, it is like a *Rock* that breaks the waves.

'Tis strange to observe the same affliction lying upon two men, how differently they carry themselves under it. The contented Christian is like *Samson*, that carried away the gates of the City upon his back*; he can go away with his cross * Judges 16. 3. bravely, and makes nothing of it; the other is like *Issachar* couching down under his burden*: the reason * Gen. 49. 14. is, the one is content, and that breeds courage; the other discontented, and that breeds fainting. Discontent fills the grief, and grief breaks the heart. When this sacred sinew of

Contentment begins to shrink, we go limping under our afflictions. We know not what burdens God may exercise us with, let us therefore preserve Contentment, as is our *Contentment*, such will be our *courage*. *David* with his five stones and his sling, defied *Goliath*, and overcame him. Get but Contentment into the sling of your heart; and with this sacred stone you may both defie the world and conquer it; you may break those afflictions which else will break you.

5. Excellency.

5. A fifth excellency is, Contentment prevents many *sinnes* and *tentations*.

1. It prevents many *sinnes*. Where there wants contentment, there wants no sin; discontentednesse with our condition, is a sin that doth not go alone, but is like the first link of the chaine, which draws all the other links along with it. In particular, there are two *sinnes* which

con-

Contentment prevents.

1. *Impatience.* Discontent and Impatience are two Twins; *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait any longer* *? As if God were so tied that he must give us the mercy just when we desire. Impatience is no small sin; as will appear, if you consider whence it ariseth; As,

* 2 King. 6.
33

1. It is for want of faith. Faith gives a right notion of God; it is an intelligent grace; it believes that Gods wisdom tempers, and his love sweetens all ingredients; this works patience; *Shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath given me?* Impatience is the daughter of infidelity. The patient hath an ill opinion of the Physician, & conceits that he comes to poison him, he will take none of his Receipts. When we have a prejudice against God, and conceit that he comes to kill us, and undo us, then we storme, and cry out through impatience. We are like a foolish

K 2 man

man('tis *Chrysostoms* simile) that cries out, Away with the plaister, though it be in order to a cure; is it not better that the plaister smart a little, then the wound fester and rankle?

2. Impatience is for want of love to God. We will beare his reproofs whom we love, not onely patiently, but thankfully. *Love*

*1 Cor. 13 *thinks no evil* *. It puts the fairest and most candid glosse upon the actions of a friend; *Love covers evil*. If it were possible for God in the least manner to erre, (which were blasphemy to think) love would cover that error; love takes every thing in the best sense; it makes us bear any stroke, *It endureth all things* *; had we love to God, we should have patience.

3. *Impatience is for want of Humility*. The impatient man was never humbled under the burden of sinne; he that studies his finnes, the numberlesse number of them, how

they

they are twisted together, and sadly accented, is patient, and saith, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him* *. *Mica, 7.9.

The greater noise drowns the lesser; when the sea roares, the rivers are still; he that lets his thoughts expand about sinne, is both silent and amaz'd, he wonders it is no worse with him. How great then is this sinne of impatience? and how excellent is *Contentation*, which is a *Surfedeas* or counterpoison against sinne? The contented Christian believing that God doth all in love, is patient, and hath not one word to say, unlesse to justifie God *. *Pl. 51.4. That is the first sin which *Contentation* prevents.

2. It prevents *murmuring*, a sinne which is a degree higher then the other; murmuring is a quarelling with God, & inveighing against him, *They spake against God* *, the murmur- * Numb. 21.5. in faith interpretatively, that God

hath not dealt well with him, and he hath deserved better from him. The murmurer *chargeth God with folly*; This is the language, or rather *blasphemy* of a murmuring spirit, God might have been a wiser and a better God. The murmurer is a mutineer. The Israelites are called in the same text *murmurers & Rebels**; and is not rebellion *as the sin of witchcraft*? Thou that art a murmurer, art in the account of God as a *Witch, a Sorcerer*, as one that deals with the devil. This is a sin of the first magnitude; murmuring offends in cursing: *Micha's mother fell to cursing, when the talents of silver were taken away**. So doth the murmurer when a part of his estate is taken away; our *murmuring* is the devils *musick*, this is that sin which God cannot bear; *How long shall I bear with this people that murmur against me**? It is a sin which whets the sword against a people, it is a land-destroying sinne; *Murmur ye not*

* Numb.
17. 10.

* Judg 17.
2

* Numb.
14. 7.

as some of them also murmured; and were destroyed of the destroyer *. 'Tis ^{*1 Cor. 10.} a ripening sinne; this, without Gods mercy, will hasten *Englands* funerals. O then how excellent is contentation which prevents this sin! To be contented, and yet murmur, is a solcecism; A contented Christian doth acquiesce in his present condition, and doth not murmur, but admire. Herein appears the excellency of contentation, it is a spiritual antidote against sin.

2. Contentment prevents many temptations; Discontent is a devil that is alwayes tempting. 1. It puts ^{1. Tentation} a man upon *indirect meanes*: He that is poor and discontented, will attempt any thing; he will go to the devil for riches; he that is proud and discontented will hang himselfe, as *Achitophel* did when his counsel was rejected. Satan takes great advantage of our discontent; he loves to fish in these *troubled waters*. Dis-

content doth both eclipse reason and weaken faith; & it is Satans policy, he doth usually break over the hedge where it is weakest. Discontent makes a breach in the soule, and usually at this breach the devil enters by a tentation, and stormes the soul. How easily can the devil by his *Logick* dispute a discontented Christian into sinne? He formes such a syllogism as this. He that is in want must study self-preservation: But you are now in want, therefore you ought to study self preservation. Hereupon to make good his *Conclusion*, he tempts to the forbidden fruit, not distinguishing between what is *needful*, and what is *lawful*. What? saith he, dost thou want a livelihood? never be such a fool as starve; take *the rising side* at a venture, be it good or bad, eat *the bread of deceit*, drink *the wine of violence*. Thus you see how the discontented man is a prey to that sad tentation, to *steale*, and take Gods Name in

in vaine. Contentation is a shield against tentation; for he that is contented, knowes as well how to *want*, as to *abound*.

He will not sinne to get a living; though the *bill of fare* growes short, he is content. He lives as the birds of the aire, upon Gods Providence, and doubts not but he shall have enough to pay for his passage to heaven.

2. Discontent tempts a man to *Atheisme and Apostacie*; sure there is ^{2Tentation} no God to take care of things here below; would he suffer them to be in want who have *walked mournfully before him**? saith Discontent; Throw ^{Mal. 3.14} off Christs livery, desist from thy religion. Thus *Jobs* wife, being discontented with her condition, saith to her husband, *Dost thou still retain thy integrity**? as if she had said, Dost ^{Job. 2.9} thou not see, *Job*, what is become of all thy Religion? *Thou fearest God and eschewest evil*, and what art thou the

the better? see how God turnes his hand against thee; he hath smitten thee in thy body, estate, relations, and *Dost thou still retain thy integrity? what? stil devout? stil weep and pray before him? Thou fool, cast off Religion, turne Atheist.* Here was a fore tentation - that the Devil did hand over to *Jab*, by his discontented wife; only his grace, as a golden shield, did ward off the blow from his heart, *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women.* What profit is it, saith the discontented person, *to serve the Almighty?* Those that never trouble themselves about Religion, are the prosperous men, and I in the meanwhile suffer want: as good give over driving the trade of Religion, if this be all my reward. This is a fore tentation, and oft it prevails. Atheisme is the fruit that grows out of the blossome of discontent.

Oh then, behold the excellency of contentment; it doth repell the
ten.

temptation. If God be mine, saith the contented spirit, it is enough; though I have no lands or tenements, his smile makes heaven; *His loves are better then wine*; *Better is the gleanings of Ephraim then the vintage of Abiezer**. I have little in hand, but much in hope; my livelihood is short, but this is his promise, *even eternall life**. I am pursued by *malice*; but better is persecuted godlinesse then prosperous wickednesse. Thus divine contentment is a spiritual antidote both against *sinne* and *temptation*.

* Jud. 8. 2.

* 1 Joh. 2. 25.

6. Contentment sweetens every condition. Christ turned the water into wine, so Contentment turnes the water of *Marah* into spirituall wine. Have I but little? yet it is more then I can deserve or challenge. This *modicum* is in mercy; 'tis the fruit of Christs blood; 'tis the legacy of free grace: a smal present sent from a King is highly valued: this little I have is with a good conscience,

6 Excellency.

science. 'Tis not *stollen water* ; guile hath not muddied or poisoned it ; it runs pure. This *little* is a pledge of more ; this bit of bread, is an earnest of that bread which I shall eat in *the Kingdome of God*. This little water in the cruse, is an earnest of that heavenly *Nectar* which shall be distill'd from the *true Vine*. — Doe I meet with some crosses ? my comfort is, if they be heavy, I have not far to go ; I shall but carry my cross to *Golgotha*, and there I shall leave it ; My crosse is light in regard of the weight of glory. Hath God taken away my comforts from me ? 'tis wel, the Comforter still abides. Thus *Contentment* as an honey-comb drops sweetnesse into every condition. Discontent is a leaven that sowers every comfort, it puts aloes and wormwood upon the breast of the creature, it lessens every mercy, it trebbles every crosse ; but the contented spirit suckes sweetnesse from every

every flower of providence, it can make a treacle of poison. *Contentation* is full of *Consolation*.

7. Contentment hath this excellency, it is the best *commentator* upon Providence; it makes a faire interpretation of all Gods dealings. 7. *Excellency.*

Let the Providences of God be never so darke or bloody, Contentment doth construe them ever in the best sense. I may say of it as the

Apostle of charity, *It thinks no evil*.*

* 1 Cor. 13. 5.

Sickness (saith Contentment) is Gods furnace, to refine his gold and make it sparkle the more; the

prison is an Oratory, or house of prayer. What if God melts away

the creature from me? he saw perhaps my heart grew too much in

love with it; had I been long in that

fat pasture, I should have surfeited; and the better my estate had been,

the worse my soule would have beene. God is wise; he hath done

this, either to prevent some sinne,

or

or to exercise some grace. What a blessed frame of heart is this. A contented Christian is an Advocate for God against unbelieve and impatience; Whereas Discontent takes every thing from God in the worst sense; it doth implead and censure God: This evill I feele is but a symptome of greater evill: God is about to undoe me; *The Lord hath brought us hither into the wilderness to shew us* * The contented soule takes all well; and when his condition is never so bad, he can say, *Yet Gods good* *.

* Numb.
20.4.

* P. 73. 1.

S E C T. 2.

The second Argument to Contentation.

The second Argument or Motive to Contentment is, a Christian hath that which may make him content *.

1. Hath

* O fortunatos nimium, bona si sua norint.
Virgil.

1. Hath not God given thee
 Christ? in him there are *unsearchable* * Eph. 3.8
riches; He is such a golden *mine* of
 wisdom and grace, that all the
 Saints and Angels can never dig to
 the bottome; as *Seneca* said to his
 friend *Polybius**, never complain of * *Fastibi*
 thy hard fortune as long as *Cesar* is *non est de*
 thy friend: so I say to a Beleever, *fortuna*
 never complaine as long as Christ *conqueri,*
 is thy friend; He is an enriching *salvo Cesa-*
 pearl, a sparkling Diamond, the *re. Sen.*
 infinite lustre of his merits makes us
 shine in Gods eyes*; in him there is * Eph. 1. 7.
 both *fulnesse* and *sweetnesse*; he is *in-*
effabile bonum *. Scrue up your * Aug.
 thoughts to the highest *axum* and
 pinnacle, stretch them to the utmost
 period, let them expatiate to their
 full latitude and extent; yet they fall
 infinitely short of those ineffable and
 inexhaustible treasures which are
 locked up in Jesus Christ: and is
 not here enough to give the soul con-
 tent? A Christian that wants ne-
 cessaries,

* Qui ha-
bet habet
rem omnia,
habet om-
nia.

cessaries, yet having Christ, he hath *the one thing needful*.*.

2. Thy soul is exercised and enamell'd with the graces of the Spirit, and is not here enough to give contentment? Grace is of a divine birth; it is the new plantation; it is the flower of the heavenly Paradise; 'tis the embroydery of the Spirit; 'tis

* 1 Joh. 3. 9 *the seed of God**, 'tis *the sacred uncti-*

1 Joh. 2. 27 *on*; 'tis Christs pourtraiture in the soule; 'tis the very foundation on which the superstructure of glory is laid. O, of what infinite value is Grace! What a Jewel is Faith!

* 2 Pet. 1. 7. well may it be call'd *precious* Faith. What is love but a divine sparkle in the soule? A soule beautified with grace, is like a roome richly hung with Arras, or Tapestry, or the Firmament bespangled with glittering Starres. These are the *true*

* Luk. 16. *riches*, which cannot stand with re-
11. probation; and is not here enough to give the soul *Contentment*? What

are

are all other things but like the wings of a butterfly, curiously painted? but they defile our fingers. Earthly riches, saith *Augustine*, are full of poverty*; so indeed they are.

* *Divitia corporales paupertatis plenae sunt.*
Aug.

For, 1. They cannot enrich the soul; Often-times under silken apparel, there is a thred-bare soul. 2. These

are corruptible: *Riches are not for ever*, as the Wise man saith*. Heaven is a place where gold and silver will not go; a Beleever is *rich towards God**, why then art thou discontented? hath not God given thee that which is better then the world?

* *Prov. 27. 24.*

What if he doth not give thee the box, if he gives thee the Jewel? What if he denies thee farthings, if he payes thee in a better coine? he gives thee gold, *viz.* spiritual mercies.

* *Luk. 12. 21.*

What if the water in the bottel be spent; thou hast enough in the fountain; What need he complain of the worlds *Emptinesse* that hath Gods *Fulnesse*? The Lord is my portion,

Psal. 16. 5.

L

saith

saith David, then let the lines fall
 where they will, in a sick-bed, or pri-
 son; I will say, *The lines are fallen*
unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have
a goodly heritage. 3. Art thou here
 heir to all the promises? hast thou
 not a reversion of Heaven? when
 thou ledest go thy hold of natural
 life, art thou not sure of eternal life?
 hath not God given thee the earnest,
 and first-fruits of glory? is not this
 enough to work the heart to Con-
 tentment?

*What though some have a store
 of Cloves, and Nutmegs and in Can-
 non saile?*

*If thou hast wherewithal to spice
 thy drabbe,*

When griefs prevaile,

*And for the future time art heir
 To the Ile of spices; is't not fair?*

Herberts
 Poems.

Save

SECT. 3.

The third Argument to Contentation.

The third Argument is, *Be content*; for else we confute our own prayers; We pray, *Thy will be done*; It is the will of God that we should be in such a condition; he hath decreed it, and he sees it best for us: Why then do we murmur, and are discontented at that which we pray for? either we are not in good earnest in our prayer, which argues *hypocrisie*, or else we contradict our selves, which argues *folly*.

SECT. 4.

The fourth Argument to Contentation.

The fourth Argument to Contentation.

contentment is, because now God hath his end, and Satan misseth of his end.

1. *God hath his end.* Gods end in all his crosse providences, is to bring the heart to submit and be content; and indeed this pleaseth God much, he loves to see his children satisfied with that portion he doth carve, and allot them. It contents him to see us contented; Therefore let us acquiesce in Gods Providence, Now God hath his end.

2. *Satan misseth of his end.* The end why the Devil (though by Gods permission) did smite *Job*, in his body and estate, was to perplex his minde; he did vex *his body* on purpose, that he might disquiet *his spirit*. He hoped to bring *Job* into a fit of discontent; and then, that he would in a passion break forth against God, but *Job* being so well contented with his condition, as that he falls in blessing of God, he did now disappoint Satan.

Satan of his hope! *The devil shall cast some of you into prison* *.

**Rev. 2.10*

Why doth the devil throw us into prison? It is not so much the hurting our body, as the molesting our minde that he aimes at; he would imprison our *Contentment*; and disturbe the regular motion of our soules; this is his designe: 'tis not so much the putting us into a *prison*, as the putting us into a *passion*, that he attempts; but by holy contentation, Satan loseth his prey, he misseth of his end. The devil hath oft deceived us; the best way to deceive him, is by *contentation* in the midst of *temptation*; our contentment will discontent Satan. Oh, let us not gratifie our enemy. Discontent is the devils *delight*; now it is as he would have it. He loves to warme himselfe at the fire of our passions. *Repentance* is the joy of the *Angels*, and *discontent* is the joy of the *Devils*: As the Devil danceth at discord, so he sings

at discontent. The fire of our passions makes the devil a bon-fire; 'tis a kinde of heaven to him to see us torturing our selves with our own troubles; but by holy Contentment we frustrate him of his purpose; and do as it were, put him out of countenance.

SECT. 5.

The fifth Argument to Contentment.

* Fortior
est qui se,
quam qui
fortissima
vincit
mania, &c.

* P. ov. 16.

The next Argument is, by contentment a Christian gets a victory over himselfe: For a man to be able to rule his own spirit*, this of all others the most noble conquest*. Passion denotes weaknesse; to be discontented, is suitable to flesh and blood; but to be in every state content, reproached, yet content; imprisoned, yet content; this is above nature; this is some of that holy valour

lour
vine
mid
be p
worl
argu
spea
deed
ly F
all, d
ring
strop
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have
upon
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God
the f
hum
que
self.
to y
facil
him
sacre

lour and chivalry, which onely a divine spirit is able to infuse. In the midst of the affronts of the world to be patient, and the changes of the world to have the spirit calmed; this argues *μεγαλόθυχον δύνον*, as *Homer* speaks; this is a conquest worthy indeed of the Garland of honour. Holy *Job* devested and turned out of all, leaving his *Scarlet*, and embracing the *Dung-hill*, (a sad catastrophe,) yet he had learned Contentment. 'Tis said, *He fell upon the ground and worshipped* *. One would have thought he should have fallen upon the ground and blasphemed; no, he fell and worshipped. He adored Gods justice and holinesse; behold the strength of grace; here was an humble submission, yet a noble conquest; he got the victory over himself. 'Tis no great matter for a man to yield to his own passions; this is facile and foeminine; but to content himself in denying of himself, this is sacred.

S E C T. 6.

The sixth Argument to Contentation.

The sixth great Argument to work the heart to Contentment, is the consideration that all Gods providences, how crosse or bloody soever, shall do a Beleever good; And we know that all things work together

* Rom. 8.
28 for good to them that love God *. Not onely all good things, but all evil things work for good; and shall we be discontented at that which works for our good? Suppose our troubles are twisted together, and sadly accented, as the Poet describes it;

πέντα
συγγε-
νέτα
τα
γὰρ
ἀντι-
θέτα.

*Littora quot conchas, quot amœna Re-
sarta flores,*

*Quotve soporiferum grana papaver
habet,*

*Sylva feras quot alit, quot piscibus un-
da natatur,*

E4

*Et tenerum pennis aëra pulsat avis,
Tot premor aduersis, &c. Ouid.*

What if sicknesse, poverty, reproach, Law-suits, &c. doe unite and muster their forces against us? All shall work *εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν*, for good; our *maladies* shall be our *medicines*: and shal we repine at that which shal undoubtedly doe us good? *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness**. Affliction may be baptiz'd *Morah*; 'tis bitter, but *physical*. Because this is so full of comfort, and may be a most excellent *Catholicon* against discontent, I shall a little expatiate.

*Ps. 112. 4

Quest. It will be enquired how the evils of affliction work for good?

Quest.

R. Several wayes.

1. They are *disciplinary*; they teach us*. The Psalmist having very elegantly describ'd the Churches trouble, *Psal. 74.* prefixeth this title to the *Psalme*, *מַסְכֵּי*, which signifies

Answ.

* *Schola crucis est schola lucis*

nifies a *Psalm* giving instruction; that which *seals up instruction*, works for good. God puts us sometimes under the *black rod*; but it is *virga disciplinaria*, a rod of discipline. *Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it* *.

* Mica 6.9. God makes our *Adversary*, our *University*: Affliction is a *Preacher*; *Blow the trumpet in Tekoah*, Jer. 6.1.

* Jer. 6.1. The *Trumpet* was to preach to the people, as appears, *vers. 8*. *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem*. Sometimes God speaks to the *Minister* to lift up his voice like a *Trumpet* *; and here he speaks to the *Trumpet*, to lift up its voice like a *Minister*. Afflictions teach us.

* Isa. 58.1. I. *Humility*: commonly prosperous, and proud; *corrections* are Gods *corrosives* to eat out the proud flesh. Jesus Christ is a *Lily of the vallies* *; he dwells in a humble heart; God brings us into the valley of tears, that he may bring us into the valley of humility; *Remember bring*

* Cant 2.1

bring my affliction, the wormwood and the gall; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me* ; * Lam. 3.
19, 20.

When men are grown high, God hath no better way with them, then to brew them a cup of wormwood. Afflictions are compared to thorns* . * Hos. 2. 6.

Gods thornes are to prick the bladder of pride: suppose a man runne at another with a sword to kill him, accidentally; it onely lets out his impostume, this doth him good. Gods sword is to let out the impostume of pride, and shall that which makes us humble, make us discontented?

12. Afflictions teach us Repentance, Thou hast chastised me, & I was chastised. I repented; and after I was instructed I smote upon my thigh, &c* . Repentance is the precious * Jer. 31.
18, 19.

When the fire is put under the Still, the water drops from the Roses: fiery afflictions make the waters of Repentance drop and distill from the eyes,

eyes, and is here any cause of discontent?

3. Afflictions teach us to pray better*, *They poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them* *. Before, they would say a prayer, now they poured out a prayer; *Vigilaba in ceto, qui stertebat in navi*, Jonah was asleep in the ship, but awake and at prayer in the *Whales belly*. When God puts under the firebrands of affliction, now our hearts boile over the more; God loves to have his children possessed with a spirit of prayer. Never did David the sweet-singer of Israel tune his Harp more melodiously; never did he pray better then when he was upon the waters. Thus afflictions do in discipline, and shal we be discontented at that which is for our good?

* Mala
que hinc
premut,
ad Deum
confugere
faciunt.

Greg.

* Isa. 26. 16.

* Psal. 66.

10, 11.

2. Afflictions are probatory*. Gold is not the worse for being tried, or corne for being fanned. Affliction is the touchstone of sincerity,

tries

tries what metall we are made of; affliction is Gods fan, and his sieve. 'Tis good that men be known; some serve God for a livery, they are like the fisherman that makes use of his net, onely to catch the fish: So they go a fishing with the net of Religion, onely to catch preferment; Affliction discovers these. The *Donatists* went to the *Gotthes*, when the *Arians* prevailed; Hypocrites will not saile in a storme; true grace holds out in the *winter-season*. That is a *precious faith*, which, like the star, shines brightest in the darkest night. 'Tis good that our graces should be brought to a triall; thus we have the comfort, and the Gospel the honour; and why then discontented?

3. Afflictions they are *expurgatory*; these evils work for good, because they work out sinne; and shall I be discontented at this? What if I have more *trouble*, if I have lesse *sin*? The brightest day hath its clouds, the purest

purest gold its drosse, the most refined soule hath some lees of corruption. The Saints lose nothing in the furnace, but what they can well spare, *their drosse*; is not this for our good? why then should we murmur?

Luke 12. I am come to send fire on the earth.

423 Terrillian understands it of the fire of affliction. God makes this like the fire of the three children, which burned onely their bonds, and set them at liberty in the furnace. So the fire of affliction serves to burne the bonds of iniquity. *By this wherefore shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sinne*.* When affliction or death comes to a wicked man, it takes away *his soule*; when it comes to a godly man, it onely takes away his *sinne*: is there then any cause why we should be discontented?

*Isa. 27. 9.

God steeps us in the brimish waters of affliction, that he may take out our spots. Gods people are his husband.

*1 Cor. 3. 9

ry*

ry; the ploughing of the ground kills the weeds, and the harrowing of the earth breaks the hard clods: Gods ploughing of us by affliction, is to kill the weeds of sinne; his harrowing of us is to break the hard clods of impenitency, that the heart may be the fitter to receive the seeds of grace: and if this be all, why should we be discontented?

4. Afflictions do both exercise and encrease grace.

First, they *exercise* grace: affliction doth breathe our graces: every thing is most in its excellency, when it is most in its exercise. Our grace, though it cannot be dead, yet it may be *asleep*, & hath need of awaking. What a dull thing is the fire when it is hid in the embers, or the Sunne when it is masqued with a cloud? a sick man is *living*, but not *lively*; afflictions quicken and excite grace. God doth not love to see grace in the eclipse. Now faith puts forth its purest

purest and most noble acts in times of affliction: God makes the fall of the leaf the spring of our graces. What if we are more passive, if grace be more active?

2. Afflictions do *encrease* grace: as the winde serves to encrease & blow up the flame, so do the windy blasts of affliction augment & blow up our graces: grace spends in the furnace, but it is like the *widowes oile in the cruse*, which did encrease by pouring out. The torch when it is beaten, burns brightest, so doth grace when it is exercised by sufferings. Sharp frosts nourish the good corne, so do sharp afflictions grace; some plants grow better in the shade then in the Sun, as the Bay and the Cypresse. The shade of adversity is better for some then the Sun shine of prosperity. *Naturalists* observe, that the *Colewort* thrives better when it is watered with salt water then with fresh: So do some thrive better in the salt water

of affliction; and shall we be discontented at that which makes us grow and fructifie more?

5. These afflictions do bring more of Gods immediate presence into the soul. When we are most assaulted, we shall be most assisted, *I will be with him in trouble* *. It cannot be ill with that man with whom God is by his powerful presence in supporting, and his gracious presence in sweetning the present trial. God will be with us in trouble, not onely to *behold* us, but to *uphold* us; as he was with *David* in the *Lions den*, and the three children in the *furnace*. What if we have more trouble then others, if we have more of God with us then others have? we never have sweeter smiles from Gods face then when the world begins to look strange; *Thy statutes have been my songs*, where? not when I was upon the throne, but *in the house of my pilgrimage* *. We read, *The Lord was not in the winds*,

* Ps. 91. 15

* Ps. 119.
54

M

nor

* 1 King.
19. 11.

nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire,
but in a metaphorical and spicuous
sense: when the winds of affliction
blows upon a Believer, God is in the
winds, when the fire of affliction kin-
dles upon him, God is in the fire,
viz. to sanctifie, to support, to streng-
then. If God be with us, the furnace
shall be turned into a festival, the
prison into a Paradise, the earthquake
into a joyful dance. Oh why should I
be discontented, when I have more
of Gods company?

6. These evils of affliction are
for good, as they bring with them
Certificates of Gods love, and
evidences of his special favour. Aff-
liction is the Saints livery, 'tis a
badge and cognizance of honour.
That the God of glory should look
upon a worm, and take so much no-
tice of him, as to afflict him rather
then lose him, is an high act of fa-
vour. * Gods rod is *Sceptrum Regale*,
a Scepter of dignity. A Job calls
Gods

Gods afflicting of us, his magnifying
of us. Some mens prosperity * Job 7.17
hath been their shame, when others
affliction hath been their crown.

7. These afflictions work for our
good, because they work for us a far
more exceeding weight of glory *. That * 2 Cor. 4.

which works for my glory in heaven,
works for my good; we do not read
in Scripture that any mans honour
and riches do work for him a weight
of glory, but afflictions do; and shall
a man be discontented at that which
works for his glory? The heavier
the weight of affliction, the heavier
the weight of glory; not that our
sufferings do merit glory, (as the Pa-
pists do wickedly glosse;) but though
they are not *causa*, they are *via*; they
are not the cause of our crown, yet
they are the way to it, and God
makes us as he did our Captain per-
fect through sufferings *; and shall
all this make us contented with
our condition? Oh I beseech you,

17

* Heb 2.10

M 2

look

look not upon the evil of affliction, but the good. Afflictions in Scripture are called *visitations**, the word in the Hebrew *קָרַע*, to visit, taken in a good sense as well as a bad. Gods afflictions are but *friendly visits*; behold here Gods rod like *Aarons rod* blossoming, and *Jonathans rod*, it hath honey at the end of it. Poverty shall starve our sinnes*; the sicknesse of the body shall cure a sick soul: O then in stead of murmuring and being discontented, *Woe the Lord*; hadst thou not met with such a rub in the way, thou mightest have gone to hell and never stopp'd.

* *Felix paupertas, beata miseria.*

SECT. 7.

The seventh Argument to Contentment.

The next Argument to Contentment is, consider the evil of discontent.

cent. Male-content hath a mixture of grief and anger in it, and both these must needs raise a storm in the soul. Have you not seen the posture of a sick man? sometimes he will sit upon his bed, by and by he will lie down, and when he is down, he is not quiet; first he turns on one side, and then on the other, he is restless: this is just the embleme of a discontented spirit, the man is not sick, yet he is never well; sometimes he likes such a condition of life, and when he hath it, yet he is not pleased, he is soon weary; and then another condition of life: this is *an evil under the Sun*.

Now the evil of discontent appears in three things.

I. The *sordidnesse* of it, it is unworthy of a Christian.

I.
Evil of
discontent.

First, it is unworthy of his profession. It was the saying of an Heathen, Bear thy condition quietly, *resce te esse hominem*, know thou art

I.

* *Ex man-
suetè for-
tunam, tu-
am, noscè re-
esse homi-
nem.* Tully

a man *. So I say, Bear thy condi-
tion contentedly, *nosce te esse Christianum*, know thou art a Christian.
Thou professest to live by faith,
what, and not content? Faith is a
grace that doth substantiate things

* *Heb. 11.1* *not seen* *, faith looks beyond the
creature, it feeds upon promises, faith
lives not by bread alone. When the
water is spent in the battle, faith
knowes, whither to have recourse,
how to see a Christian dejected in
the want of visible supplies and re-
cruits, where is faith? Oh, faith
one, my estate in the world is down.
I, and which is worse, thy faith is
down. Wilt thou not be content-

* *Act. 10.* and fowles of the aire * must you have

12. first and second course? This is like
Thomas, Unless I put my finger into
the print of the nales, I will not be-

* *Joh. 20.* lieve *. So, unless thou hast a fen-

sible feeling of outward comforts, thou wilt not be content. True faith will trust God where it cannot trace him, and will adventure upon Gods Word though it hath nothing in view. You who are discontented because you have not all you would, let me tell you either your faith is a *nan-chen*, or at best but an *embryo*; 'tis a weak faith that must have stilts and crutches to support it. Nay, discontent is not only below faith, but below reason; why are you discontented? is it because you are dispossessed of such comforts? well, and have you not reason to guide you? doth not reason tell you that you are but *tenants at will*? and may not God turn you out when he please? You hold not your estate *jure*, but *gratis*; not by a juridical right, but upon favour and courtesie.

It is unworthy of the relation we stand in to God; a Christian is invested with the title and priviledge

Eph. 1. 3 of sonship; he is an heir of the promise: Oh consider the lot of free grace is fallen upon thee, thou art nearly allied to Christ, and of the blood royal; thou art advanced in some sense, above the Angels, why then art thou, being the Kings son,

2 Sam. 13 leane from day to day? *2 Sam. 13. 4* Why art thou discontented? Oh how unworthy is this? as if the heire to some great Monarch should go pining up and down because he may not pick such a flower.

*The second
evil of dis-
content.*

2. Consider the sinfulness of it, which appears in three things.

The causes }
The concomitants } of it.
The consequences }

1. It is sinful in the causes, which are these.

1. *Pride*. He that thinks highly of his deserts, usually esteemes meanly of his condition; a discontented

man

man is a proud man, he thinks him-
 selfe better then others; therefore
 findes fault with the wisdom of God
 that he is not above o-

thers *. Thus the *Nec quemquam jam ferre*
 thing formed saith to *potest Casare priorem,*
 him that formed it, *Impensius parem.*—
Lucan. l. 1. Pharsal.
 hast thou made me thus*?

Why am I not higher? Discontents * Rom. 9.
 are nothing else but the agitations
 and boilings over of pride. 20

2. The second cause of discontent
 is envy, which *Augustine* calls *visi-*
um diabolicum, the sinne of the de-
 vil; Satan envied *Adam* the glo-
 ry of Paradise, and the robe of inno-
 cency: he that envies what his neigh-
 bour hath, is never contented with
 that portion which Gods providence
 doth parcel out to him*; as envy stirs
 up strife, (this made the Plebeian
 faction so strong amongst the Ro-
 mans) so it creates discontent; the
 covous man looks so much upon the
 blessings which another enjoys, that

* *Fertilior*
leges est a-
lienis sem-
per in aeris,
Vicinumq;
pecus
grandius
uber habet.

he Ovid.

he cannot see his own mercies; and so doth continually vex and torment himself. Cain envied that his brother's sacrifice was accepted, and his rejected; hereupon he was discontented, & presently murderous thoughts began to arise in his heart.

3. The third cause is *Covetousnesse*. This is a radical sin. Whence are vexing Law-suits; but from discontent: and whence is discontent, but from covetousnesse? *Covetousnesse* and *contentednesse* cannot dwell in the same heart. *Avarice* is an *hell*, that is never satisfied. The covetous man is like *Behemoth*; behold, he drinketh up a river; he trusteth that he can draw up Jordan into his mouth. There are four things (saith *Salomon*) say, *It is not enough*; which may addresse fifth, *The heart of a covetous man*; he is still craving. Covetousnesse is like a Wolf in the breast, which is ever feeding; and because a man is not satisfied, he is never content.

4. The

Job 42.
23

4. The fourth cause of Discontent is *Jealousie*, which is sometimes occasion'd through melancholy, and sometimes misapprehension. The spirit of jealousy causeth this evil spirit. Jealousie is the rage of a man: *Pro. 6.34 and oft, this is nothing but *suspicion* and *phansie*; yet such as creates real discontent.

5. The fifth cause of Discontent is *distrust*, which is a great degree of Atheisme. The discontented person is ever distrustful. The bill of provision growes low; I am in these straits and exigencies, can God help me? Can he prepare a table in the wilderness? Sure he cannot. My estate is exhausted, can God recruit me? My friends are gone, can God raise me up more? Sure the arm of his power is shrunk. I am like the dry sear, can any water come upon this fleece? If the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? Thus the anchor of hope, and the

*1 King. 7.

2.

the shield of faith being cast away, the
soul goes pining up and down.

Discontent is nothing else but
the *Echo* of unbelief: and remem-
ber *distrust* is worse then *distresse*.

2.

2. Discontent is evil in the con-
comitants of it, which are two.

1. Discontent is joynd with
sullen melancholy; a Christian of
right temper, should be ever chear-
ful in God; *Serve the Lord with
gladness**. A signe the oile of grace
hath been poured into the heart,
when the oile of gladnesse shines in the
countenance. Chearfulnesse creates
Religion; how can the discontented
person be chearful? Discontent
is a dogged, sullen humour; because
we have not what we desire, God
shall not have a good word or look
from us; as the Bird in the cage be-
cause she is pent up, and cannot fly
in the open aire, therefore beats her
self against the cage, and is ready to
kill her self. Thus that peevish Pro-
phet

*ps. 100. 2.

phet; I doe well to be angry to the death *.

2. Discontent is accompanied with *unthankfulness*; because we have not all we desire, we never minde the mercies which we have: we deale with God as the widow of *Sarepta* did with the prophet; the Prophet *Elijah* had been a means to keep her alive in the famine; for it was for his sake, that her *meale in the barrel*, and her *oile in the cruse* failed not; but as soon as ever her sonne dies, she falls into a passion, and begins to quarrel with the Prophet; *What have I to doe with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son **? So ungratefully do we deal with God: we can be content to receive mercies from God; but if he doth crosse us in the least thing, then through discontent, we grow teuchy and impatient, and are ready to fly upon God; thus God loseth all his mercies *.

* *Leviticus 4.*

* *1 Kings 17. 18.*

* Φαυλαὶ αἰσῶσι
αἰδώς ἐστὶ τῆς ἐν-
δοξίας, ἥτις ἐν ἀγα-
θῶν Ἀρεταῖς ἡδονὴ
ἡδονὴς ἐστὶν ἡ
ὁδὸς ἐξελθῆναι. Lu-
cian. Ep. gr. 2. 31.

cies. We read in Scripture
of the *thankoffring*. The
contented person curs
short of this, the Lord lof
his *thankoffring*. A disc

contented Christian repines
the midst of mercies; as *Adam*, who
sind in the midst of *Paradise*. *Discon-*
cent is a Spider that sucks the poison
of unthankfulness out of the sweet-
est flower of Gods blessings, and by
devilish chymistry extracts dross out
of the most refined Gold. The
contented person thinks every thing
he doth for God too much; and every
thing God doth for him too little.
O what a sin is unthankfulness! It
is an accumulative sinne. What
Cicero saith of *Parricide*, I may say
of *Ingratitude*; there are many sinnes
bound up in this one sinne, it is a vo-
luminous wickedness; and how full
of this sinne is *Discontent*? A discon-
tented Christian, because he has
not all he would, therefore discon-

* Ingratus
vitandus
est ut dirū
scelus, nec
cogitari
pestilennius
potest: nam
zellus ipsa
furdus ni-
hil creat.
Pct. Cri-
nitus. lib.
2. Poem.
* Qui oc-
cidit pa-
trem, plur-
ma commi-
sit peccata
in uno.

nours God with the mercies which he bath. God made *Eve* out of *Adam's* rib, to be an *helper* (as the Father speaks;) but the Devil made an arrow of this rib, and shot *Adam* to the heart. So doth discontent take the rib of Gods mercy and ungratefully shoot at him. Estate, Liberty shall be employed against God. Thus it is often-times. Behold then how Discontent and Ingratitude are interwoven and twisted one within another: thus discontent is sinful in its concomitantes.

Chrylost.

13. It is sinfull in its *Consequences*, which are these: *Mat. 3. 6*

3.

Discontent
is sinful, in
its conse-
quences.

1. It makes a man very unlike the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is a *meek Spirit*. The Holy Ghost descended in the likenesse of a *Dove*. A Dove is the embleme of meeknesse; A discontented spirit is not a meek spirit.

I.

*Mat. 3. 6

2. It makes a man like the Devil. The Devil being swell'd with the poison

2.

poison of envy and malice, is never content : Just so is the Male-content. The Devil is an unquiet spirit, *he is still walking about* ; 'tis his rest to be walking. And herein is the discontented person like him; for he goes up and down vexing himselfe. *Seeking rest and finding none* ; he is the Devils picture.

3.

3. Discontent disjoynes the soul, it untunes the heart for duty ; *Is any*

* *Jam. 5. man afflicted? let him pray* *. But,

13. any man *discontented*? how shall he pray? *Lift up pure hands without*

* *1 Tim. 2. 8. wrath* *. Discontent is full of wrath and passion; The Male-content cannot lift up pure hands; he lifts up *leprous hands*, he poisons his prayers, will God accept of a poison'd sacrifice? *Chrysostome* compares prayer to a fine Garland; Those, saith he, that make a Garland, their hands had need be clean : Prayer is a precious Garland, the heart that makes it had need be clean. Discontent throws

poison

poison into the spring, (which was death among the *Romans*;) Discontent puts the heart into a disorder and mutiny, and such a one cannot serve the Lord *without distraction*.

4. Discontent sometimes unfits for the very use of reason; *Jonah* in a passion of discontent, spake no better then blasphemy, and non-sense; *I do well*, saith he, *to be angry to the death**. What? to be angry with God? and to die for anger? sure he did not know well what he said. When discontent transports, then like *Moses*, we speak *unadvisedly with our lips*. This humour doth even suspend the very acts of reason.

5. Discontent doth not only disquiet a mans selfe, but those who are near him. This evil spirit troubles *families, Parishes, &c.* If there be but one string out of tune, it spoiles all the musick. One discontented spirit makes jarrings and discords a-

N mong

mong others. 'Tis this ill humour
that breeds quarrels, and Law suits.
Whence is all our Contention, but for
want of Contentation? From whence
come warres and fightings among you
*Jam. 4. 1. come they not hence, even of your lust
in particular from this lust of Dis
content? Why did Absalom make
a warre against his Father, and would
have taken off not only his Crowne
but his Head? Was it not his discon
tent? Absalom would be King. Why
did Ahab stone Naboth? Was it not
discontent about the Vine-yard?
Oh this devil of Discontent! The
you have seen the Unprofitableness

3.
The simplicity
of it.

*Psal. 39. 6

3. Consider the simplicity of
I may say as the Psalmist, *I saw
they are disquieted in vaine* * : which
appears thus, *I live and I am
ed in. Is it not a vain simple thing
be troubled at the losse of that which
is in its own nature perishing and
changeable? God hath put a vice*

ignor

11

finde

studs into the creature; all the world
 things changes; and for me to meet
 with inconstancy here, to lose a
 friend, estate, to be in a constant
 fluctuation, is no more then to see a
 flower wither, or a leaf drop off in
 Autumne. There is an *Autumn* upon
 every comfort, a *fall of the leaf*; Now
 it is extream folly to be discontented
 at the losse of those things which are
 in their own nature loseable. What
Solomon saith of *Riches*, is true of all
 things under the Sun, *They take*
wings. *Noahs Dove* brought an O-
 live-branch in its mouth; but pre-
 sently flew out of the Ark, and never
 returned more: Such a comfort
 brings to us honey in its mouth, but
 hath wings; and to what purpose
 should we be troubled, unlesse we
 had wings to fly after and overtake

Discontent is an heart break-
 ing sorrow of the heart the spi-
 rit is broken*; it takes away the

*Prov. 15.
 13.

Jonah. 4. 8.

comfort of life. There is none of us but have many mercies if we see them; now, because we have not all we desire, therefore we will lose the comfort of that which we have already. *Jonah* having his Gourd smitten (a withering vanity,) was so discontented, that he never thought of his miraculous deliverance out of the Whales belly; he takes no comfort of his life, but wisheth that he might die. What folly is this? we must have all or none; herein we are like children, that throw away the piece which cut them, because they may have no bigger. Discontent eats out the comfort of life. Besides, it were well if it were seriously weighed how prejudicial this is, even to our health. For discontent, as it doth disquiet the minde, so it doth pine the body; it frets as a moth, and by wasting the spirits, weakens the vitals; The plague of Discontent brings the body

into a
Folly

3
our
heavi
chear
conte
portra
ing be
not co
then
tent
the Fe
vous.
then
afflict
Christ
Jewes
go to
his for
man in
drink;
on it
imbic
4.

into a consumption; and is not this Folly?

3. Discontent does not ease us of our burden, but makes the crosse heavier. A contented spirit goes chearfully under its affliction. Discontent makes our grief as unsupportable, as it is unreasonable. If the leg be well, it can endure a fether, and not complain; but if the leg be sore, then the fether troubles. Discontent of minde is the *sore* that makes the Fetters of affliction more grievous. Discontent troubles us more then the trouble it selfe, it steeps the affliction in worm-wood. When Christ was upon the Crosse, the Jewes brought him *gall and vineger* to drink, that it might adde to his sorrow. Discontent brings to a man in affliction gall and vineger to drink, this is worse then the affliction it self. Is it not folly for a man to embitter his own crosse?

4. Discontent spins out our

troubles the longer. A Christian is discontented, because he is in want; and therefore he is in want, because he is discontented; he murmurs, because he is afflicted; and therefore he is afflicted, because he murmurs. Discontent doth delay and adjourne our mercies. God deales herein with us as we use to do with our children: when they are quiet and chearful, they shall have any thing; but if we see them cry and fret, then we with-hold from them: We get nothing from God by our discontent, but blows. The more the child struggles, the more it is beaten. When we struggle with God by our sinful passions, he doubles and doubles his strokes; God will tame our curst hearts. What got Israel by their peevishnesse: they were within 11. dayes journey of Canaan, and now they were discontented, and began to murmur; God leads them a march of forty years long in the wilder-

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wildernesse. Is it not folly for us to
adjourne our lowly mercies? Thus
you have seen the evil of discontent.
I have been long upon this Argu-
ment; but *nunquam nimis dicitur,*
quod nunquam satis dicitur.

SECT. 8.

The eighth Argument to Contenta-
tion.

The next Argument or Motive
to Contentment is this; Why is not
a man content with the competency
which he hath? perhaps if he had
more, he would be lesse content;
covetousnesse is a drie drunkenness.
The world is such, that the more we
have, the more we crave*; it cannot
fill the heart of man. When the fire
burnes, how do you quench it? not
by pouring oile on the flame, or lay-
ing on more wood, but by withdraw-

* *Crescit
amor num-
mi quan-
tum ipsa
pecunia
crescit.*

ing the fuel. When the appetite is enflam'd after riches, how may a man be satisfied? not by having just what he desires, but by withdrawing the fuel, &c. moderating and lessening his desires. He that is contented hath enough. A man in a fever or dropsie, thirsts; how do you satisfy him? not by giving him liquid things which will enflame his thirst the more, but by removing the cause, and so curing his distemper. The way for a man to be contented, is not by raising his estate higher, but by bringing his heart lower.

SECT. 9.

The ninth Argument to Contentment.

The next Argument to Contentment is, *The shortnesse of life.* It is
but

but a vapour, saith James * *James 4.14*
^{reb. x. 12.} life is a wheele ever running. * *Πνεύμα*
 The Poets * painted time with wings, *Sophocles.*
 to shew the volubility and swiftnesse * *Phocylides.*
 of it. *Job* compares it to a swift
 post, * (our life rides post) and to a day, * *Job. 9. 25.*
 not a year. It is indeed like a day.
 Infancy is as it were the day-break,
 Youth is the Sun rising, full growth
 is the Sun in the Meridian, old age is
 Sun-setting. Sicknesse is the even-
 ing, then comes the night of death.
 How quickly is this day of life spent:
 often times this Sun goes down at
 noone-day; life ends before the e-
 vening of old age comes; Nay,
 sometimes the Sun of life sets pre-
 sently after Sun-rising. Quickly after
 the dawning of Infancy, the night of
 death approaches. Oh, how short is
 the life of man! The consideration
 of the brevity of life may worke the
 heart to contentment. Remember
 thou art to be here but a day, *parum*
est, quid multum vivatici? thou hast
 but

Quid op-
pina est ad
breuem ex-
tam longis
oribus?
Hyper-

but a short way to go, & what need
a long provision for a short way? If
a Traveller hath but enough to bring
him to his journeyes end, he desires no
more. We have but a day to live
& perhaps we may be in the twelfth
houre of the day; why, if God give
us but enough to bear our charge
till night, it is sufficient. Let us be
content. If a man had the lease of
an house or farme, & but for twent
three dayes, and he should fall
building and planting, would he not
be judged very indiscreet? So when
we have but a short time here, and
death calls us presently off the stage,
to thirst immoderately after the
world, and pull downe our soules
to build up an estate, is it not be-
trayment folly? Therefore as *Esau* said
once in a profane sense concerning his
birth right, Lo, I am at the point to
die, and what profit shall this birth
right doe to me? So let a Christian
say in a Religious sense, Lo, I am
at the point to die, and what profit shall this birth
right doe to me?

even at the point of death, my grave is going to be made, and what good will the world do me: if I have but enough till *Sun-setting*, I am content.

SECT. 10.

The tenth Argument to Contentment.

The tenth Argument or Motive to Contentment is; Consider seriously the nature of a prosperous condition. There are in a prosperous estate three things.

1. *Plus molestia*, more trouble. 1. *Plus molestia*.
Many who have abundance of all things to enjoy, yet have not so much content and sweetness in their lives, as some that go to their hard labour. Sad, solicitous thoughts do often attend a prosperous condition. Care is the *malus genius*, or evil

vil spirit which haunts the rich man, and will not suffer him to be quiet. When his chest is full of gold, his heart is full of care, either how to manage, or how to encrease, or how to secure what he hath gotten. Oh the troubles and perplexities that do waite upon prosperity! The worlds high seats are very uneasie; Sun-shine is pleasant, but sometimes it scorseth with its heat; the Bee gives honey, but sometimes it stings: Prosperity hath its sweetnesse, and also its sting. Competency with Contentment is farre more eligible. Never did *Jacob* sleep better then when he had the heavens for his Canopy, & a hard stone for his pillow. A large voluminous estate is but like a long trailing garment, which is more troublesome then useful.

2. Plus periculi.

2. In a prosperous condition there is *plus periculi*, more danger, and that two wayes.

First, *Ex parte ipsius*, in respect of

of a mans self. The rich mans Table
 is oft his snare; he is ready to in-
 gulph himselfe too deep in these
 sweet waters*. In this sence it is hard
 to know how to abound. It must be
 a strong braine that beates heady
 wine; he had need have much wis-
 dome and grace that knowes how to
 bear an high condition; either he is
 ready to kill himselfe with care, or
 surfet himselfe upon luscious de-
 lights. Oh the hazard of *honour*,
 the damage of *dignity*! Pride, se-
 curity, rebellion, are the three
 wormes that breed of plenty*. The
 pastures of prosperity are ranke and
 surfeting. How soon are wee bro-
 ken upon the soft pillow of ease*?
 Prosperity is often a trumpet that
 sounds a retreat, it calls men off
 from the pursuit of Religion. The
 Sun of Prosperity oft dulls, and puts
 out the fire of zeale. How many
 soules hath the *plurisie* of abundance
 kill'd*? They that *will be rich*, fall
 into

* *Magna
 sollicitudo
 est à soli-
 citate non
 vini. Aug.
 de verb.
 Dom. 13.*

* Deut. 32.
 15.

* *ωλειε
 ρδιπερις-
 σεναι εκ-
 τερχηλι-
 ζει η υ εν-
 δεα. The-
 ophylact.*

* *Plurimi
 sunt qui*

paupertate
positi non
habent pa-
tientiam;
qui
abunden-
tia non
habent
temperan-
tiam. Re-
migit.

1. Tim. 6.

10.

into snares *. The world is birds
lime at our feet, it is full of golden
sands, but they are quick sands. Pro-
perity like smooth Jacob, will sup-
plant and betray; a great estate with-
out much vigilancy will be a thief
to rob us of heaven; such as are
upon the pinnacle of honour, are in
most danger of falling.

Sæpius ventis agitur ingens

Pinus, & celsæ gravione casu

Dicidit turres, feruntque summos

Pulvina montes, &c.

Hbr. Carm. 1. ode 10.

Althowre estate is lesse hazardous.

The little Pinnacle rides safe by the

Shore, when the gallant Ship ad-

vancing with its mast and top-saile, is

cast away. *Homo victus in Paradiso,*

victor in stercore. Adam in Paradise

was overcome; when Job on the

dong-hill was a conquerour. Sam-

son fell asleep on Delilahs lap: Some

have

have fallen for fast asleep on the lap
 of ease and plenty; that they have
 never awaked till they have been in
 hell. The worlds fawning is worse
 then its frowning; and it is more to
 be feared when it smiles, then when
 it thunders. Prosperity in Scrip-
 ture is compared to a candle: Job
 22. When his candle shined upon
 my head. How many have burnt
 their wings about this candle. *Sage-
 tum ab extas nimis sternit, rami onere
 franguntur; ad maturitatem non per-
 venit nimia fecunditas.* The corne
 being over-ripe sheds, and fruit
 when it mellowes, begins to rot.
 When men doe mellow with the
 Sun of Prosperity, commonly their
 soules begin to rot in sin. How hard
 is it for a rich man to enter into the
 Kingdome of Heaven? His golden
 weights keep him from ascending up
 the hill of God; and shall we not be
 content, though we are placed in a
 lower Orbe? What if we are not
 in

* Turpi
 fregerunt
 sacraluxu
 Divitie
 molles,
 &c. Juve-
 nal. 6. Sa-
 tyr.

* Pericu-
 losior est
 mundus
 blandiens
 quam ful-
 minans.

Aug.
 * Sen. ad
 Luciliū
 Ep. 80.

* Luke 18.
 24.

in so much bravery, and gallantry
 others: we are not in so much danger
 as we want the honour of the world
 so the temptations. Oh the abundance
 of danger that is in abundance.
 We see by common experience, the
Lunatics, when the Moone is de-
 clining and in the wane, are sober
 enough; but when it is in the full
 they are more wild and exorbitant.
 When mens estates are in the wane
 they are more serious about their
 soules, more humble; but when it is
 the full of the *Moone*, and they have
 abundance, then their hearts be-
 ginne to swell with their estates
 and are scarce themselves. Those
 that write concerning the several
Climates, observe, that such as live
 in the Northern parts of the world
 if you bring them into the Southern
 part, they lose their stomachs
 and dye quickly; but those that
 live in the more Southerne
 climates, bring them into the
 North

North, and their stomachs mend,
and they are long-lived: Give me
leave to apply it, bring a man from
the cold starving climate of poverty,
into the hot Southern climate of pro-
sperity, and he begins to lose his ap-
petite to good things, he grows
weak, and a thousand to one if all his
Religion doth not die: but bring a
Christian from the South to the
North, from a rich flourishing estate
into a jejune low condition, let him
come into a more cold and hungry
state, and then his stomach mends,
he hath better appetite after heaven-
ly things, he hungers more after
Christ, he thirsts more for grace, he
is more at one meal of the bread
of life than at six before; this man is
now like to live and hold out in his
Religion; be content then with a
medicum, if you have but enough to
pay for your passage to heaven, it
sufficeth.

A prosperous condition is
O dan-

* Gen. 26.

12, 13, 14.

* *Felicitas
semper sub
iuncta est
invidia.*Laert. Di-
ogenes de
vit. Philos.

dangerous *ex parte vicini*, in regard
of others: a great estate for the
most part drawes * envie to it;
whereas *in parvis quies*. David
a Shepherd was quiet; but David a
Courtier, was pursued by his ene-
mies: envy cannot endure a superi-
our; an envious man knows not
how to live, but upon the ruins of
his neighbour; he raiseth himselfe
higher by bringing others lower.
Prosperity is an eye-sore to many.
Such sheep as have most wool are
soonest fleec'd. The barren tree
growes peaceably, no man meddles
with the Ash or willow, but the Ap-
ple-tree and the Damasin shall have
many rude suitors. Oh then be con-
tent to carry a lesser saile; he that
hath lesse revenues, hath lesse envie;
such as beare the fairest frontispiece,
and make the greatest shew in the
world, are the white for envy and
malice to shoot at.

3. P'us re-
gen bonis.

3. A prosperous condition hath

In it *plus recensionis*, a greater reckoning; every man must be responsible for his talents. Thou that hast great possessions in the world, dost thou trade thy estate for Gods glory? Art thou *rich in good works*? Art thou a *καὶ πλούσιος ἀγαθῶν*? Grace makes a *private person* a *common good*. Dost thou disburse thy mony for publick uses? it is lawful (in this sence) to put out our money to use. Oh let us all remember an estate is a *depositum*: we are but stewards, and our Lord and Master will ere long say, *Give an account of your stewardship*: the greater our estate, the greater *our charge*; the more our revenues, the more our reckonings. You that have a lesser mill going in the world, be content; God will expect lesse from you, where he hath sowed more sparingly.

S E C T. II.

The eleventh Argument to Contentation.

The eleventh Argument is the example of those who have been eminent for Contentation. *Examples* are usually more forcible then *Precepts*. Abraham being call'd out to hor service, and such as was against flesh and blood, was content. God Gen. 22.2 bids him offer up his sonne *Isaac*; this was a great work: *Isaac* was *filius senectutis*, the sonne of his old age; *filius dilectionis*, the sonne of his love; *filius promissi*, the sonne of the promise: Christ the Messiah was to come of his line, in *Isaac* shall thy seed be blessed; so that to offer up *Isaac* seem'd not onely to oppose *Abrahams* reason, but his faith too; for if *Isaac* die, the world (for ought he knew)

knew) must be without a Mediator.
 Besides, if *Isaac* be sacrificed, was
 there no other hand to do it, but *Abraham*? must the Father needs be
 the executioner? must he that was
 the instrument of giving *Isaac* his
 being, be the instrument of taking it
 away? yet *Abraham* doth not dispute
 or hesitate, but believes *against hope*,
 and is content with Gods prescripti-
 on. So, when God call'd him to
leave his countrey *, he was content. * Heb. 11. 8
 Some would have argued thus: what
 leave all my friends, my native soile,
 my brave situation, and go turne
 pilgrim? *Abraham* is content: be-
 sides, *Abraham* went blindfold, he
knew not whither he went *. God * Verf. 8.
 held him in suspense, he must go
 wander he knows not where; and
 when he doth come to the place God
 had laid out for him, he knows not
 what oppositions he shall meet with
 there; the world doth seldome cast
 a favourable aspect upon strangers*, * Gen. 31.
 15.

yet he is content, and obeys; *He so-
 Heb. 11.9 *journed in the land of promise*; behold
 a little his pilgrimage. First, He goes
 to *Charran* a City in *Mesopotamia*;
 when he had sojourned there a while,
 his father dies; then he removes to
Sicbem, then to *Bethlem* in *Canaan*;
there a famine ariseth, *then* he went
 down to *Egypt*, after that he returns
 into *Canaan*; when he came there ('tis
 true, he had a promise) but he found
 nothing to answer expectation; he
 had not there one foot of land, but
 was an exile: in this time of his so-
 journeying he buried his wife; & as for
 his dwelling, he had no sumptuous
 buildings, but led his life in poore
 cottages: all this was enough to have
 broken any mans heart. *Abraham*
 might think thus with himselfe, is
 this the land I must possesse? here is
 no probability of any good; *all things*
are against me; wel, is he discontented?
 no, God saith to him, *Abraham* go,
 leave thy Countrey; and this word

was

was enough to lead him all the world
 over, he is presently upon his march;
 here was a man had learned to be
 content. But let us descend a little
 lower, to heathens*. *Zeno* (of whom
Seneca speaks) who had once been ve-
 ry rich, hearing of a ship wrack, and
 that all his goods were drowned at
 Sea, Fortune, saith he (he spake in an
 Heathen dialect) hath dealt well with
 me, and would have me now to stu-
 dy Philosophy*; he was content to
 change his course of life, to leave off
 being Merchant, and turne Philoso-
 pher. And if an Heathen said thus,
 shall not a Christian much more
 say, when the world is drained from
 him, *Iubet Deus mundum derelinquere,*
 & *Christum expeditius sequi*, God
 would have me leave off following
 the world, and study Christ more,
 and how to get to heaven? Do I see
 an Heathen contented, and a Chri-
 stian disquieted*? How did Heathens
 vilifie those things which Christians

* Socrates
Philosophus
rum lucu-
lentissimus,
pauper
semper, nu-
dis pedibus
incedens,
sordido
pallio
contentus,
honoris
omniacque
terrena
contem-
nens. Plur.
 * *Iubet me*
fortuna ex-
peditius
Philosophia-
ri. Seneca.

* *Pudeat,*
pudeat il-
los nomine
tenus Chri-
stianos, qui-
bus quod
ad hanc
remattinet,
Ethnici
rectius sa-
pucrunt.
Hyperius.

magnifie? though they knew not God, or what true happinesse meant, yet would speak very sublimely of a *Numen* or Deity, and of the life to come, as *Aristotle* and *Plato*; and for those Elizian delights which they did but phansie, they undervalued and contemned the things here below; it was the doctrine they taught their Scholars, and which some of them practised, that *men should strive to be contented with a little*; they were willing to make an exchange; to have lesse gold, and more learning: and shall not we be content then to have lesse of the world, so we may have more of Christ? May not Christians blush to see Heathens content with a *viaticum*, so much as would recruit nature, and to see themselves so transported with the love of earthly things? that if they begin a little to abate, and the *bill of provision* growes short, they murmur, and are like *Micah*, *Have ye taken away*

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my gods, and doe you aske me what I
aile*? Have Heathens gone so farre
in contentation? and is it not sad for
us to come short of them that came
short of heaven? These *Heroes* of
their time, how did they embrace
death it self? *Socrates* died in prison,
Hercules was burnt alive, *Cato* (whom
Seneca calls *virtutum viva imago*, the
lively image and portraiture of ver-
tue) thrust through with a sword:
but how bravely, and with what con-
tentment of spirit did they die? Shall
I, saith *Seneca*, weep for *Cato*, or *Re-
gulus*, or the rest of those Worthies
that died with so much valour and
patience? Did not crosse providen-
ces make them to alter their counte-
nance? and do I see a Christian ap-
palled and amaz'd? Did not death
affright them? and doth it distract
us? did the spring-head of Nature
rise so high? and shall not Grace, like
the waters of the *Sanctuary*, rise high-
er? We that pretend to live by faith
may

* Jud. 18.
24.

may we not goe to Schoole to them who had no other Pilot but reason to guide them? Nay, let me come a step lower, to creatures void of reason; we see every creature is contented with its allowance; the beasts with their provender, the birds with their nests, they live onely upon providence; and shall we make our selves below them? let a Christian go to Schoole to the Oxe and the Asse, to learne contentednesse; we think we never have enough, and are still laying up; the fowles of the aire do not lay up, *they reap not, nor*

- * Mar. 6. *gather into barnes*^{*}; it is an argument
26. which Christ brings to make Christians contented with their condition. The birds do not lay up, yet they are provided for, and are contented, *Are ye not* (saith Christ) *much better then they?* but if you are discontented, are ye not much worse then they? let these examples quicken us.

S E C T,

SECT. 12.

The twelfth Argument to Contentment.

The twelfth Argument to Contentment is, whatever change or trouble a childe of God meets with, it is all the hell he shall have. Whatever eclipse may be upon his name, or estate; I may say of it as *Athanasius* of his banishment, it is *nubecula citò transitura*, a little cloud which will soon be blown over; and then his gulf is shot, his hell is past;

*Albus ut obscuro detergit nubila cælo
Sape Notus, neque parturit imbres
Perpetuos, sic tu Sapiens finire memento
Tristitiam.* Hor. Ode 7. l. 1.

Death begins a wicked mans hel, but
it puts an end to a godly mans hell,
Think

Think with thy self, what if I endure this? it is but a *temporary hell*; indeed, if all our hell be here, it is but an easie hell. What is the cup of affliction to the cup of Damnation? *Lazarus* could not get a crumbe; he was so diseased, that the dogs took pity on him, and (as if they had been his physicians) *licked his sores*; but this was an easie hell, the *Angels* quickly fetch'd him out of it. If all our hell be in this life, in the midst of this hell we may have the love of God; and then it is no more *Hell*, but *Paradise*. If our hell be here, we may see to the *bottom* of it, it is but skin-deep, it cannot touch the soul, and we may see to the *end* of it: 'tis an hell that is short-liv'd*. After a wet night of affliction comes a bright morning of the Resurrection; if our lives are short, our trials cannot be long. As our *riches* take wings and fie, so do our *sufferings*; then let us be contented.

* *Noſte
pluit totū,
redeunt
ſpectacula
noſtræ.*

SECT.

SECT. 13.

The thirteenth Argument to Contentment.

The last Argument to contentment is this, To have a competency and to want *Contentment*, is a great judgement. For a man to have an huge stomach*, that whatever meat you give him, he is still craving, and never satisfied; you use to say, this is a great judgement upon the man: Thou who art *heluo pecunia*, a devourer of money, and yet never hast enough, but still criest, *Give, give*, this is a sad judgement; *They shall eat, and not have enough**. The throat of a malicious man is an open sepulchre*, so is the heart of a covetous man. Covetousnesse is not onely *malum culpa*, but *malum pena*; it is not onely a sinne, but the

* *Gannium appetitum.*

* Hos. 4. 10.

* Rom. 3. 13.

the punishment of a sinne. 'Tis a secret curse upon a covetous person, he shall thirst, and thirst, and never be satisfied; *He that loveth silver, shal not be satisfied with silver**, and is not this a curse? What was it but a severe judgement upon the people of Judah? *Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drinke, but ye are not filled with drinke**. Oh let us take heed of this plague. Did *Esau* say to his brother, I have abundance, my brother,* or as we translate it, *I have enough?* and shall not a Christian say so much more? 'Tis sad that our hearts should be as a stone to heavenly influences, and as a sponge to earthly vapours. Let all that hath been said, work our mindes to holy contentation.

CHAP.

*Ecclef. 5. *silver, shal not be satisfied with silver**,
 10. and is not this a curse? What was
 it but a severe judgement upon the
 people of Judah? *Ye eat, but ye have
 not enough; ye drinke, but ye are not
 filled with drinke**. Oh let us take
 heed of this plague. Did *Esau* say
 to his brother, I have abundance, my
 brother,* or as we translate it, *I have
 enough?* and shall not a Christian
 say so much more? 'Tis sad that our
 hearts should be as a stone to heaven-
 ly influences, and as a sponge to
 earthly vapours. Let all that hath
 been said, work our mindes to holy
 contentation.

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CHAP. XII.

*Three things inserted by way of
Caution.*

IN the next place I come to lay down some necessary Cautions: Caution. 1
though (I say) a man should be contented in every estate; yet there are three estates in which he must not be contented.

1. He must not be contented in a *natural estate*; here he must learne not to be content. A sinner in his pure naturals is under *the wrath of God**, * Joh. 3. 36.
and shall he be content, when that dreadfull Vial is going to be poured out? is it nothing to be under the scorchings of divine fury? *Who can dwell with everlasting burnings?* A sinner, as a sinner, is under the power of *Satan**, * AAs 26.
and shall he in *this estate* be contented? who would be contented 18.

to stay in the enemies quarters? while we sleep in the lap of sinne, the Devill doth to us as the *Philistines* did to *Samson*, cut the lock of our

* 2 Cor. 4 strength, and put out our eyes * ; be

4. not content, O sinner in this estate.

For a man to be in debt body and soul, in fear every hour to be arrested and carried prisoner to hell, shall he now be content? here I preach against contentation. Oh get out of this condition, I would hasten you out of it, as the Angel hastened *Lot*

* Gen. 19

15.

out of *Sodom* * ; there is the smell of the fire and brimstone upon you.

The longer a man staies in his sinne, the more sinne doth streng-

then * ; 'tis hard to

* Heb. 3. 13.

Viacere consuetudinem est dura
pugna. Aug.

Τὰ μὴ χαλαρὰ τῷ σώματι
ὀκνοῖν εἶν θρασυς, μάλλον
βλάπτει. Hippocr. l. 2. A-
phor. 9.

get out of sin when the heart as a garri-son is victualled & fortified. A young plant is easily re-

moved; but when the tree is once rooted, there is no stirring of it: thou who

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who art rooted in thy pride, unbelie-
 lief, impenitency, it will cost thee
 many a sad pull ere thou art plucked
 out of thy *natural estate**. 'Tis an ^{* Jer. 6. 16.}
 hard thing to have a brazen face,
 & a broken heart, *He travelleth with*
*iniquity**, ^{* Psal. 7. 14.} Be assured, the
 longer you travel with your sinnes,
 the more and the sharper pangs must
 you expect in the *new birth*. Oh be
 not contented with your natural
 estate. *David saith, Why art thou*
*disquieted, O my soul**? but a sinner ^{* Ps. 4. 5.}
 should say to himself, Why art thou
 not disquieted, O my soul? why is
 it that thou layest afflictions so to
 heart, and canst not lay sin to heart?
 'Tis a mercy when we are disquieted
 about sinne; a man had better be at
 the trouble of setting a bone, then
 to be lame, and in paine all his life;
 blessed is that trouble that brings the
 soul to Christ. 'Tis one of the worst
 sights to see a bad conscience quiet
 of the two, better is a fever, then a

lethargy. I wonder to see a man in his natural estate content; what? content to go to hell?

caution 2. 2. Though in regard of externals a man should be in every state content, yet he must not be content in such a condition wherein God is apparently dishonoured. If a mans trade be such that he can hardly use it but he must trespassse upon a Command (and so make a trade of sinne) he must not content himself in such a condition; God never called any man to such a calling as is sinful; a man in this case had better knock off, and divert; better lose some of his gaine, so he may lessen some of his guilt. So for servants that live in a *profane family* (the suburbs of hell) where the Name of God is not called upon, unless when it is taken in vain they are not to content themselves in such a place, they are to come out of the Tents of these sinners; there is double danger in living among the profane.

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1. Lest we come to be infected with the poison of their ill example. *Joseph* living in *Pharaohs* Court, had learned to swear by the life of *Pharaoh* *. We are prone to suck in example *, men take in deeper impressions by the eye, then by the ear. *Dives* was a bad patterne, and he had many brethren that seeing him sinne, trode just in his steps; therefore saith he, I pray thee send him to my Fathers house; for I have five brethren: that he may testifie to them, that they come not into this place of torment *. *Dives* knew which way they went; it is easie to catch a disease from another, but not to catch health. The bad will sooner corrupt the good, then the good will convert the bad; take an equal quantity and proportion, so much sweet wine with so much sower vinegar; the vinegar will sooner sower the wine, then the wine will sweeten the vinegar. Sinne is compared to the

* Gen. 42.

15.

* *trivium*

* *exemplis*

magis

q. sam legi

bms.

* Luke 16.

27, 28.

212 *The Art of divine Contentment.*

* 1 Kings 8. 38. *plague* *, and to *leaven* *, to shew of what a spreading nature it is. A bad master makes a bad servant; *Jacobs* cattel by looking on the rods which were speckied and ring-strak'd, conceived like the rods. We do as we see others *before* us, especially *above* us. If the head be sick, the other parts of the body are dis-tempered. If the Sunne shine not upon the mountaines, it must needs set in the valleys. We pray, *Lead us not into temptation*, and do we lead our selves into temptation? *Lot* was the worlds miracle, who kept himself fresh in *Sodom*s salt water.

2. By living in an evil family we are liable to incurre their punishment; *Pour out thy wrath upon the families that call not upon thy Name* *. For want of pouring out Prayer, the wrath of God was ready to be poured out. 'Tis dangerous living in the *Tents of Kedar*. When God sends his *flying roll*, written within and

and without with curses, it enters in-
to the house of the thief and perjurer,
and it consumes the timber and the
stones thereof*. Is it not of iad con-
sequence to live in a prophane per-
jur'd family, when the sin of the
Governour pulls his house about his
ears? if the stone and timber be
destroyed, how shall the servant
escape? And suppose God send not
a temporal roll of curses in the fami-
ly, there is a spiritual roll, and that is
worse*. Be not content to live
where Religion dies, Salute the bre-
thren, and Nymphas, and the Church
which is in his house*; the house of
the godly is a little Church, the house
of the wicked a little hell*. Oh incor-
porate your selves into a religious
family, the house of a good man is
perfum'd with a blessing*. When
the holy oyle of grace is poured on
the head, the savour of this ointment
sweetly diffuseth it self, and the ver-
ue of it runs down upon the skirts

*Zach. 8. 4

*Pro. 3. 33

*Col. 4. 15

*Pro. 7. 27

*P. o. 3. 33

of the family. Pious examples are very magnetical and forcible. *Seneca* said to his sister, Though I leave you not wealth, yet I will leave you a good example. Let us ingrasse our selves among the Saints; by being often among the spices, we come to smell of them.

Caution 3. 3. The third Caution is, though in every condition we must be content, yet we are not to content our selves with a *little grace*. Grace is the *best blessing*. Though we should be contented with a competency of estate, yet not with a competency of grace. It was the end of Christs Ascension to heaven, *to give gifts*; and the end of those gifts, *that we may grow up into him who is the head, Christ* *. Where the Apostle distinguisheth between our *being* in Christ, and our *growing* in him; our ingrassing, and our flourishing: be not content with a *modicum* in Religion. 'Tis not enough that there be *life*, but

* Eph. 4.15

but there must be *fruit*. Barrennesse:
in the Law was accounted a curse.
The farther we are from fruit, the
nearer we are to curling*. 'Tis a sad.* Heb.6.8.
thing when men are fruitful onely
in the *unfruitful works of darknesse*.
Be not content with a dram or two
of grace; next to a *still-borne*, a
traveling in Christ is worst. Oh
covet more grace, never think
thou hast enough; it is *bona & ho-*
sta avaritia; we are bid to *covet*
*the best things**: it is an heavenly* 1 Cor.12.31.
ambition, when we desire to be
high in Gods favour; a blessed con-
tention, when all the strife is, who
shall be most holy. Saint Paul,
though he was content with a little
of the world, yet not with a little
grace; he *reached forward*, and *pres-*
sed towards the mark of the high cal-
*ling of God in Christ Jesus**. A true Phil. 3.
Christian is a *wonder*; he is the most 13, 14.
contented, and yet the least satisfied:
he is contented with a morsel of
P 4 bread

bread, and a little water in the Crosse, yet never satisfied with grace; he doth *anhelare*, pant and breath after more; this is his prayer, Lord, more conformity to Christ, more communion with Christ; he would faine have Christs image more lively pictured upon his soule. True grace is alwayes progressive: as the Saints are called *Lampes* and *Starres* in regard of their *light*; so *trees of righteousness* * for their growth; they are indeed like the tree of life, bringing forth several sorts of fruit.

* Isa. 61. 3.

A true Christian grows, 1. *Formâ*, in beauty. Grace is the best complexion of the soule; it is at the first plantation like *Rachel*, faire to look upon; but still the more it lives, the more it sends forth its rayes of beauty. *Abrahams* faith was at first beautiful; but at last it did shine in its orient colours, and grew so illustrious, that God himself was in love with

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with it, and makes his faith a paterne to all Beleevers.

2. A true Christian growes *Sua-uitate*, in sweetnesse. A poisonfull weed may grow as much as the Hyssop, or Rose-mary; the Poppy in the field, as the Corne; the Crab, as the Pearmaine; but the one hath a harsh, sowre taste, the other mellows as it growes; An hypocrite may grow in outward demensions, as much as a childe of God; he may pray as much, professe as much; but he growes onely in magnitude, he brings forth sowre grapes, his duties are leavened with pride; the other ripens as he growes, he growes in love, humility, faith, which do mellow and sweeten his duties, and make them come off with a better relish. The beleever grows as the flower, he casts a fragrancy and perfume.

3. A true Christian growes *Robore*, in strength; he growes still more rooted, and settled. The more the tree growes

* *Epist. 2.*
Col. 2. 7.

growes, the more it spreads its root in the earth *: A Christian who is a Plant of the heavenly *Jerusalem*, the longer he grows, the more he incorporates into Christ, and sucks spirituall juice and sap from him; he is a dwarfe in regard of humility, but a gyant in regard of strength. He is strong to do duties, to beare burdens, to resist tentations.

4. He grows *Vigore*, in the exercise of his grace; He hath not only oile in his lamps, but his lamps are burning and shining. Grace is agil and dexterous, Christs vines doe

* Cant. 6. flourish*; hence we reade of a lively
 11. hope*, and a fervent love*; here is

* 1 Pet. 1. 3.

* 1 Pet. 1.

the activity of Grace. Indeed sometimes grace is as a sleepy habit in the soul, like sap in the vine, not exerting its vigour, which may be occasion'd through spiritual sloth, or by reason of falling into some sin; but this is only *pro tempore*, for a while; the spring of grace will come, the flowers will appear,

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pear, and the fig-tree put forth her green figs. The fresh gales of the Spirit do sweetly revive and refocillate grace. The Church of Christ, whose heart was a garden, and her graces as precious spices, prays for the heavenly breathings of the Spirit, that her sacred spices might flow out*.

* Cant. 4.
16.

5. A true Christian grows *In-cremento*, both in the kinde, and in the degree of grace. To his spirituall living he gets an augmentation: he addes to *faith, vertue*; to *vertue, knowledge*; to *knowledge, temperance, &c.** here is grace growing in the kind; and he goes on from *faith to faith**; there is grace growing in the degree. We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren, because your faith groweth exceedingly*, *ἡ πίστις αὐτῶν*, it* 2 Thes. 1.3.] encreaseth over and above. And the Apostle speaks of those spirituall plants which were laden with Gospel fruit*, *Phil. 1. 11.* A Christian is com-
* Phil. 1. 13

* 2 Pe. 1. 5.
6.

* Rom. 1.
17

* 2 Thes. 1.3.]

compar'd to the *Vine*, (an emblem of fruitfulness,) he must bear full clusters: We are bid to *perfect* that which is *lacking in our faith**. A

* 1 Theſ. 3. Christian must never be so old as to be past bearing; he brings forth fruit in his old age*. An heaven-borne

* Ps. 92. 14 plant is ever growing; he never thinks he grows enough; he is not content unless he adde every day one cubit to his spiritual stature. We must not be content just with so much grace as will keep life and soul together; a dram or two must not suffice, but we must be stil encreasing

* Col. 2. 19 with the encrease of God*: We had need renew our strength as the

* Isa. 40. 31 Eagle*; our finnes are renewed, our wants are renewed, our temptations are renewed, and shal not our strength be renewed? Oh be not content with the first embryo of grace, grace in its infancy and minority. You look for degrees of glory, be you Christians of degrees.

Though

Though a Beleever should be contented with a *modicum* in his estate, yet not with a *modicum* in Religion. A Christian of the right breed labours still to excell himselfe, and come nearer unto that holinesse in God, who is the originall, the paterne and prototype of all holinesse.



CHAP. XIII.

USE 4.

Shewing how a Christian may know whether he hath learned this divine Art.

Use. IV. **T**HUS having laid down Use. IV. these three Cautions, *Triall,* I proceed in the next place to an use, of Triall. 4. How may a Christian know that he hath learned this lesson of Contentment? I shall lay down some *verba*, or characters by which you shall know it.

Y. A

character

1. A contented spirit is a *silent spirit*. He hath not one word to say against God; I was *dumb* or *silent*, because *thou, Lord, didst it* *, Ps. 39.

* Psal. 39. Contentment silenceth all dispute; * Lam. 3. 18. *He sitteth alone and keepeth silence* *.

There is a *sinful* silence, when God is dishonoured, his truth wounded, and men hold their peace; this silence is a loud sinne; and there is an *holy* silence, when the soul sits down quiet and content with its condition; When *Samuel* tells *Eli* that heavy message from God, that he would judge his house; and that the iniquity of his family should not be purged away with sacrifice for ever *; doth *Eli* murmur, or dispute? No, he hath

* 1 Sam. 3.

18.

not one word to say against God; *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good* *. A discontented spirit saith

* Ver. 18.

as *Pharaoh*, *Who is the Lord?* why should I suffer all this? why should I be brought into this low condition? *Who is the Lord?* But a gracious heart

-saith

saith as Eli, *It is the Lord*, let him do what he will with me. When *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the sons of *Aaron*, had offered up *strange fire*, and fire went from the Lord, and devoured them*, *Levit. 10.* is *Aaron* now in a passion of discontent? No, *Aaron held his peace**, *A* * *Verf. 3.* contented spirit is never angry, unless with himself, for having hard thoughts of God. When *Fonah* said, *I do well to be angry*; this was not a contented spirit, it did not become a Prophet.

2. A contented spirit, is a *cheerful spirit*; the Greeks call it *εὐθυμία*. 2 *Charact.* Contentment is something more than *Patience*; for *Patience* denotes only submission*, Contentment denotes *cheerfulness*. A contented Christian is more than passive; he doth not only *bear the Crosse*, but take up the crosse*. He looks upon God as a wise God; and whatever he doth, though it be not *ad voluntatem*, yet *ad sanitatem**; it is in order to a cure: Hence the contented

* *carus est*
significat,
a *versita-*
tes *sustine-*
re, *Cypri-*
an item.
persevera-
re, *Casau-*
bon.

* *Math. 6*
24.
Aug.

contented Christian is chearfull, and
 with the Apostle, takes pleasure in
 * 2 Cor. infirmities, distresses, &c. * He
 12. 10. doth not onely submit to Gods deal-
 ings, but rejoyce in them; he doth
 not onely say, *Just is the Lord* in all
 that is befallen me; but *Good is the*
Lord. This is to be contented.
 A sullen melancholy is hatefull; it is
 * 2 Cor. 9. 7. said, God loves a chearfull giuer *;
 and God loves a chearfull liuer. We
 are bid in Scripture not to be careful,
 but we are nowhere bid not to be
 chearfull. He that is contented with
 his condition, doth not abate of his
 spirituall joy; and indeed he hath this
 within him which is the ground of
 chearfulness; he carries a pardon
 sealed in his heart.

3. A contented spirit, is a thank-
 ful spirit. This is a degree above
 the other. In every thing giuing
 thanks. A gracious heart spies a
 grace in every condition, therefore

hath

hath his heart serued up to than ful-
ness; others will bless God for prospe-
rity, he blesseth him for affliction.
Thus he reasons with himself, Am I
in want? God sees it better for me
to want then to abound; God is now
dieting of me, he sees it better for my
spiritual health, sometimes to be kept
fasting; therefore he doth not onely
submit, but is thankful. The male-
content is ever complaining of his
condition; the contented spirit is e-
uer *giving thanks*. Oh what height
of grace is this! A contented heart is
a *Temple* where the praises of God
are sung forth, not a *Sepulchre* where-
in they are buried. A contented Chri-
stian in the greatest straits hath his
heart enlarged, and dilated in thank-
fulnesse. He oft contemplates Gods
love in election, he sees that he is a mo-
ument of mercy, therefore desires to
be a *paterne* of praise. There is always
gratulatory musick in a contented
soul, the Spirit of grace works in the
heart

heart like new wine, which under the heaviest pressures of sorrow, will have a vent open for thankfulnesse; this is to be content.

4. He that is content, no condition comes amiss to him; so it is in the

Text, *in quocunque statu*,

* Καὶ ἐν ὅποις κεχερῆσαι ὄντα, καὶ ἀνέχεσθαι, καὶ ἰσχυροῦν. *in whatever state I am*,
A contented Christian
can, *provi res exigat*,
turne himselfe to any

thing; either want, or abound.

The people of Israel knew neither how to abound, nor yet

* Οἱ Ἰσραηλῖται ἐν πείνῃ ἢ δέσσει, κατελάλησαν γὰρ τὸ Θεῷ, καὶ εἶπον, Μὴ δουλώσεται ὁ Θεός; καὶ τοιμάσαι περὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἶπον, ὅτι ἡ χορτάζει αὐτοὺς γὰρ καὶ ἀνεπλήθυνσαν, καὶ ἀπελάλησαν. *how to want**, when they were in want, they murmured; Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? and when they ate and were filled, then they lifted up the heel. Paul knew how to manage every estate; he could be either a note higher, or lower; he was (in this sense) an *Universallist*, he

could do any thing that God would have him): ** Simili est vita rota, in cuius modo infimā, modo supremā parte versamur: Aquinas.*

If he were in prosperity, he knew how to be thankful; if in adversity, he knew how to be patient; he was neither lift up with the one, nor cast down with the other. He could carry a greater saile, or lesser; Thus a contented Christian knowes how to turne himselfe to any condition. *Sicut bonus iest dux & peritus, qui in quolibet exercitu operatur secundum exigentiam ejus; & variarius, qui ex quolibet corio facit optimos solulares; ita Christianus sapiens, Aquinas*

quis sit, quolibet statu bene se gerat. We have those who can be contented in same estate, but not in every estate. They can be content in a wealthy estate, when they

they have the streames of milk and honey; while Gods candle shines upon their head, now they are content; but if the winde turne and be against them, now they are discontented. While they have a silver crutch to lean upon, they are contented; but if God breaks this crutch, now they are discontented; but *Paul* had

ἡ ἰσχυρία ἐν τῇ ἐν-
δοξίᾳ, ἐν τῇ πλησύνῃ
τῆς ἐκείνου πατρὸς,
ὅτε ἰσχυρὸν χαυρέμενος.
Chrysost.

learned in every estate to carry himself with equanimity of minde; others could be content with their affliction, so God would give them leave to pick and choose. They could be content to bear such a crosse, they could better endure sicknesse then poverty, or bear losse of estate then losse of children; if they might have such a mans crosse, they could be content; any condition, but the present: this is not to bee content. A contented Christian doth not go to choose his crosse, but leave

leaves God to choose for him ; he is content both for the *kinde*, and for the *duration*. A contented spirit saith; Let God apply what medicine he pleaseth, and let it lie on as long as it will; I know when it hath done its cure, and eaten the venome of sin out of my heart, God will take it off againe. In a word, a contented Christian, being sweetly captivated under the authority of the Word, desires to be wholly at Gods dispose, and is willing to live in that sphere and climate where God hath set him; and if at any time he hath been an instrument of doing noble and brave service in the publick, he knowes he is but a *rational toole*, a servant to authority, and is content to return to his former private condition of life. *Cincinnatus*, after he had done worthily, and purchased to himself great fame in his Dictatorship, did notwithstanding afterwards voluntarily return to till and manure

Pet. Mart.
1yr.

his foure acres of ground. This should it be with Christians, professing *Godlinesse with Contentment*, having served *Mars*, not daring to offend *Jupiter*; lest otherwise they discover onely to the world a *brutish valour*, being so untam'd and headstrong, that when they have conquered others, yet they are not able to rule their own spirits.

5. Character.

5. He that is contented with his condition, to rid himselfe out of trouble will not run himselfe into sin. I deny not but a Christian may lawfully seek to change his condition; so farre as Gods providence doth go before, he may follow, but when men will not follow providence, but run before it, as he said, *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait any longer* *? if God doth not open the doore by his providence, they will break it open, and winde themselves out of affliction by sin, bringing their soules into trouble by

2 Kings 6.

bring-

bringing their estates out of trouble. This is far from holy Contentation, this is unbelief broken out into rebellion. A contented Christian is willing to wait Gods leasure, and will not stir till God open a door. As Paul said in another case, *They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out pri-*

vely? nay verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out:* So with reverence saith the contented Christian, God hath cast me into this condition; and though it be sad and troublesome, yet I will not stir, till God by a clear providence fetch me out. Thus those brave spirited Christians, *Heb. 11. 35. They accepted not Deliverance**, that is, upon base, dishonourable termes. They would rather stay in prison, then purchase their liberty by carnal compliance. *Estius* observes on the place, they might not onely have

* A9. 16.

37.

* Heb. 11.

had their enlargement, but been rais'd to honour, and put into offices of trust; yet the honour of Religion was dearer to them, then either liberty or honour. A contented Christian will not remove; till as the Israelites, he see a *pillar of cloud and fire* going before him: *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly waite for the salvation of the Lord* *. 'Tis good to stay Gods leasure, and not to extricate ourselves out of trouble, till we see the starre of Gods providence pointing out a way to us.

*Lam.3.26

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CHAP. XIV.

USE 5.

*Containing a Christian Directory, or
Rules about Contentment.*

Use V. **I** Proceed now to an *use of* *use 5.*
direction, to shew *Direction,* Chri-
stians how they may attaine to this
Divine Art of Contentation. Cer-
tainly it is feasible, others of Gods
Saints have reached to it. St. Paul
here had it; and what do we think
of those we read of in that little book
of Martyrs, *Heb. 11.* who had trialls
of *cruell. mockings and scourgings,*
who wandred about in *Deserts and*
Caves,

Caves, yet were contented; so that it is possible to be had. And here I shall lay down some Rules for holy Contentment.

SECT. II.

I. Rule. *Advance Faith.*

All our disquiets do issue immediately from unbelief. 'Tis this that raiseth the storme of discontent in the heart. Oh set faith a work; 'tis the property of faith to silence our doubtings, to scatter our feares, to still the heart when the passions are up. Faith workes the heart to a sweet, serene composure; 'tis not having *food* and *raiment*, but having *Faith* which will make us content. Faith chides down passion; When Reason begins to sinke, let Faith swim.

Quest. *Quest.* How doth faith worke Contentment? *Ans.*

Answ. 1. Faith shewes the soule, *Answ. 1.* that whatever its trials are, yet it is from the hand of a Father; 'tis indeed a bitter cup, but, *Shall I not drinke the cup which my father hath given me to drinke?* 'tis in love to my soule; God corrects with the same love he crownes me; God is now training me up for heaven, he carves me, to make me a polished shaft. These sufferings bring forth patience, humility, even the peaceable fruits of righteousness*. And if God* *Heb. 12.* can bring such sweet fruit out of a sower stock, let him graft me where he please. Thus faith brings the heart to holy contentment. *11.*

2. Faith sucks the honey of Contentment out of the hive of the Promise. Christ is the *Vine*, the Promises are the clusters of Grapes that grow upon this Vine; and Faith presseth the sweet wine of Contentment out of these spiritual clusters of the Promises. I will shew you but

but one cluster; *The Lord will give grace and glorie**: here is enough for Faith to live upon. The Promise is the flower out of which Faith distills the spirits, and quintessence of divine Contentment. In a word, Faith carries up the soul, and makes it aspire after more noble and generous delights then earth affords, and to live in the world *above* the world*. Would you lead contented lives: live up to the height of your Faith.

*"Discite
in hoc
mundo su-
pra mun-
dam esse.
Ambrose.*

SECT. 2.

2. Rule. Labour for Assurance.

Oh let us get the interest cleared between God and our own souls. *Interest* is a word much in use, a pleasing word. Interest in great friends, interest-money; Oh if there be an *interest* worth looking after, 'tis an interest

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Interest
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Interest between God and the soule;
Labour to say, *My God*. To be with-
out money, and without friends, and
without God too *, is sad; but he,
whose faith doth flourish into Assu-
rance, that can say, *I know in whom I*
*have beleev'd**, (as Saint Paul,) that
man hath enough to give his heart
contentment. When a mans debts
are paid, and he can go abroad with-
out feare of arresting, what content-
ment is this! Oh, let your title be
cleared; if God be ours, whatever
we want in the creature, is infinite-
ly made up in him. Doe I want
bread? I have Christ the bread of
life. Am I under desilement? his
blood is like the trees of the Sanctua-
ry, not only for meat, but medicine*.
If any thing in the world be worth
labouring for, it is to get sound e-
vidences that God is ours. If this
be once clear'd, what can come a-
miss? No matter what stormes
I meet with, so that I know where

Eph. 2.
12.

* 2 Tim. 1.
12.

* Ezek. 47.
12.

to

to put in for harbour. He that hath God to be his God, is so well contented with his condition, that he doth not much care whether he hath any thing else. To rest in a condition where a Christian cannot say God is his God, is matter of *fear*; and if he can say so truly, and yet is not contented, is matter of *shame*. David encouraged himself in the *Lord his God**; It was sad with him, Ziklag burnt, his wives taken captive, he lost all, and like to have lost his Souldiers hearts too, for they *speak of stoning him*; yet he had the ground of Contentment within him, *viz. an interest in God*, and this was a pillar of supportment to his spirit. He that knowes *God is his*, and all that is in God is *for his good*; if this doth not satisfie, nothing will.

*1 Sam. 30. 6.

SECT. 3.

3. Rule. *Get an humble spirit.*

The humble man is the contented man; if his *estate* be low, his heart is lower then his estate; therefore he is content. If his *esteem* in the world be low, he that is little in his own eyes, will not be much troubled to be little in the eyes of others. He hath a meaner opinion of himself then others can have of him. The humble man studies his own unworthinesse; he looks upon himself as *less then the least* of Gods mercies*, *Gen. 32.
and then a *little* will content him: He 10
cries out with *Paul*, that he is *the chief of sinners**; therefore doth not * 1 Tim. 1.
murmure, but admire: He doth 15
not say his comforts are small, but his sins are great. He thinks it a mercy he is out of hell, therefore is contented.

tented. He doth not goe to carve out a more happy condition to himselfe; he knowes the worst piece God cuts him, is better then he deserves. A proud man is never contented, he is one that hath an high opinion of himselfe: therefore under small blessings is disdainfull, under small crosses impatient. The humble spirit is the contented spirit, if his cross be light, he reckons it in the inventory of his mercies; if it be heavie, yet takes it upon his knees, knowing that when his estate is worser, it is to make him better. Where you lay humility for the foundation, Contentment will be the superstructure.

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SECT. 4.

4. Rule. *Keep a clear conscience.* 1 Tim. 3. 9.

Contentment is the *Manna* that is laid up in the *Ark* of a good conscience; Oh take heed of indulging any sin. 'Tis as natural for guilt to breed disquiet, as for putrid matter to breed vermine. Sin lies as *Fenah* in the ship, it raiseth a tempest. If dust or motes be gotten into the eye, they make the eye water, and cause soreness in it; if the eye be clear, then it is free from that soreness: If sin be gotten into the conscience, which is as the eye of the soul, then griefe and disquiet breeds there; but keep the eye of conscience clear, and all is well. What *Solomon* saith of a good stomach, I may say of a good conscience: *To the hungry soule* Pro. 27. 7. *every bitter thing is sweet;* so to a
 R good

good conscience every bitter thing is sweet; it can pick contentment out of the Crosse. Good conscience turnes the waters of *Marah* into wine. Would you have a quiet heart? get a smiling conscience. I wonder not to hear *Paul* say, he was in every state content. When he could make that triumph, *I have*

* *Act. 23. 1*

lived in all good conscience to this day.

When once a mans reckonings are clear, it must needs let in abundance of contentment into the heart. Good conscience can suck contentment out of the bitterest drugges; under standers. *This is our rejoicing, the*

* *2 Cor. 1.*

testimony of our conscience * in case of

12.

imprisonment. *Paul* had his prison songs, and could play the sweet lesson of contentment when his feet

* *Act. 16.*

were in the stocks *; one calls it *bona*

25.

Augustine.

conscientia Paradisus, the Paradise of a good conscience, and if it be so, then in prison we may be in Paradise. When the times are troublesome,

good

good conscience makes a calme; If
 conscience be clear, what though the
 dayes be cloudy? Is it not a content-
 ment to have a friend alwayes by, to
 speak a good word for us? such a
 friend is conscience. Good consci-
 ence, as *Dauids Harp*, drives away
 the evil spirit of discontent. When
 thoughts begin to arise, and the heart
 is disquieted; Conscience saith to a
 man as the *King* did to *Nehemiah*,
 Why is thy countenance sad? So
 saith conscience; hast not thou the
 seed of God in thee? art not thou an
 heir of the Promise? Hast not thou
 a treasure that thou canst never be
 plundered of? Why is thy counte-
 nance sad? Oh keep conscience
 dear, and you shall never want con-
 tentment. For a man to keep the
 heart of his body, the veines and ar-
 teries free from colds and obstructi-
 ons; is the best way to maintaine
 health: So, to keep conscience
 dear, and to preserve it from the ob-
 structions

Neh. 2. 12

obstructions of guilt, is the best way to maintaine contentment. First conscience is pure, and then peaceable.

S. E. C. R. 5.

5. Rule. *Earn to deny your selfe*

Look well to your affections, bridle them in. Do two things.

1. Mortifie your desires.

2. Moderate your delights.

1. *Mortifie your desires;*

must not be of the Dragons temper, who (they say) is so thirsty, that no water will quench his thirst.

Mortifie therefore your inordinate affection; in the Greek it is *εὐδαιμονία*

κακία your evil affection; to shew that our desires when they are inordinate, are evil. Crucifie your de-

fires,

fires, ~~rejoice~~ be as dead men; a dead man hath no appetite.

Quest. How should a Christian *Quest.* martyr his desires?

Answ. 1. Get a right judgement *Answ.* of the things here below: They are mean beggarly things; *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not* * *Pro 23.5.*

The appetite must be guided by reason; the affections are the feet of the soule, therefore they must follow the judgement, not lead it.

2. Often seriously meditate of mortality. Death will soon crop those flowers which we delight in, and pull down the fabrick of those bodies which we so garnish and beautifie. Think when you are locking up your money in your chest, who shall shortly lock you up in your coffin.

3. *Moderate your delights.* Set not your hearts too much upon any creature *. What we over- * *Pl. 62.10* love, we shall over-grieve. *Rachel*

R 3

set

set her heart too much upon her children; and when she had lost them, she lost her self too; such a veine of griefe was opened as could not be stetched; she refused to be comforted. Here was discontent. When we let any creature lie too neere our heart, when God pulls away that comfort, a piece of our heart is rent away with it. Too much fondnesse ends in frowardnesse. Those that would be content in the want of mercy, must be moderate in the enjoyment. *Jonathan* dipt the rod in honey, he did not thrust it in. Let us take heed of ingolping our selves in pleasure; better have spare diet, then by having too much to surfeit.

SECT. 6.

Rule. Get much of heaven into your heart.

Spiritual things satisfy; the more of heaven is in us, the lesse earth will content. He that hath once tasted the love of God, his thirst is much quenched toward sublunary things; the joyes of Gods Spirit are heart-filling and heart-cheering joyes; he that hath these hath heaven begun in him, Rom. 14. 17. and shall we not be content to be in heaven? Oh get a sublime heart, *Seek the things that are above*, * Pf. 63. 5. * Col. 3. 1. lie aloft in your affections, thirst after the graces and comforts of the Spirit; the Eagle that flies above in the aire, fears not the stinging of the serpent; the serpent creeps on his belly, and stings onely such creatures as go upon the earth.

Discontent is a serpent that stings
 onely an earthly heart; an heavenly
 soule that with the Eagle flies aloft,
 findes abundantly enough in God to
 give contentment, and is not stung
 with the cares and disquiets of the
 world.

SECT. 7.

7. Rule. *Look not so much on the
 dark side of your condition, as
 on the light.*

God doth chequer his providen-
 ces, white and black, as the pillar of
 cloud had its light side and dark; look
 on the light side of thy estate, who
 looks on the back side of a landskip.
 Suppose thou art cast in a Law-suit,
 there is the *dark side*; yet thou hast
 some land left, there is the *light side*.
 Thou hast sickness in thy body, there
 is the *dark side*; but grace in thy
 soule,

foole, there is the *light side*. Thou
hast a childe taken away, there is the
dark side; thy husband liues, there
is the *light side*. Gods providences
in this life are various, represented
by those speckled horses among
the Myrtle-trees *, which were *red* *z. and
and *white*; mercies and afflictions
are interwoven, God doth speckle
his work. Oh, saith one, I want
such a comfort: but weigh all thy
mercies in the balance, and that will
make thee content. If a man did
want a finger, would he be so discon-
tented for the losse of that, as not to
bee thankful for all the other parts
and joints of his body? Look on the
light side of your condition, and
then all your discontents will easily
diskead; do not pore upon your
losses, but ponder upon your mer-
cies. What? wouldst thou have no
crosse at all? Why should one man
think to have all good things, when
his selfe is good but in part? wouldst
thou

thou have no evil about thee; who
hast so much evil in thee? thou art
not fully sanctified in this life; how
then thinkest thou to be fully satis-
fied? never look for perfection of
contentment till there be perfection
of grace.

2. Tim. 2. 21. If a man desire perfect contentment, let him first be perfect in holiness.

1. Cor. 13. 9. We know in part, we see in part, we know in part.

1. Cor. 13. 12. When we shall see face to face, we shall know fully, even as we are known.

1. Cor. 13. 13. Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three abide even unto the end.

1. Cor. 13. 14. But the greatest of these is charity.

1. Cor. 13. 15. Charity shall never fail.

1. Cor. 13. 16. Charity is the bond of perfect knowledge.

1. Cor. 13. 17. Charity is the love of God.

1. Cor. 13. 18. Charity is the love of our neighbour.

1. Cor. 13. 19. Charity is the love of the world.

1. Cor. 13. 20. Charity is the love of the flesh.

1. Cor. 13. 21. Charity is the love of the devil.

1. Cor. 13. 22. Charity is the love of the world.

1. Cor. 13. 23. Charity is the love of the flesh.

1. Cor. 13. 24. Charity is the love of the devil.

1. Cor. 13. 25. Charity is the love of the world.

1. Cor. 13. 26. Charity is the love of the flesh.

1. Cor. 13. 27. Charity is the love of the devil.

1. Cor. 13. 28. Charity is the love of the world.

* 2. Tim. 2.

3.

We are in a military condition,
we are soldiers; now a soldier is
content with any thing: what though
he hath not his stately house, his rich
furniture, his soft bed, his full table,
yet doth not complaine; he can lie in
straw as well as doane; he minding
not his lodging, but his thoughts run
upon dividing the spoil, and the gar-
land of honour that shall be set
upon

upon his head; and for hope of this is content to run any hazard, endure any hardship. Were it not absurd to hear him complain that he wants such provision, and is faine to lie out in the fields? a Christian is a *military* person, he fights the Lords battles, he is Christs Ensigne-bearer. Now, what though he endures hard fare, and the bullets fly about: he fights for a crown, and therefore must be content.

2. We are in a *peregrine* condition, Pilgrims and travellers. A man that is in a strange countrey is contented with any diet or usage, he is glad of any thing, though he hath not that respect or attendance as he looks for at home; nor is capable of the priviledges and immunities of that place, he is content; he knows when he comes into his own country he hath lands to inherit, and there he shall have honour and respect: So it is with a childe of God, he is in a pilgrim-

pilgrim-condition, I am a stranger
with thee; and a sojourner, as all my
fathers were*. Therefore let a Chri-
stian be content: he is *in* the world,
but not *of* the world: he is born of
God, and is a Citizen of the new
Jerusalem*, therefore, though he
hunger and thirst, and haue no certain
dwelling place*, yet he must be con-
tent: it will be better when he comes
into his own country.

3. We are in a mendicant condi-
tion: we are beggers, we beg at hea-
uen gate. *Give us this day our daily
bread*: we live upon Gods almes,
therefore must be content with any
thing: a begger must not pick and
choose, he is contented with the re-
fuse. Oh, why dost thou murmure
that art a begger, and art fed out of
the almes basket of Gods provi-
dence?

mat. 6. 11. *Sac*

SECT. 9.

A Rule. *Let not your hopes depend
extrinſice upon theſe outward
things.*

Leane not upon ſandy pillars;
we oft build our comfort upon ſuch
a friend or eſtate, and when that
prop is removed, all our joy is gone,
and our hearts begin either to ſaile
or fret. A lame man leanes on his
crutches, and if they *break* he is un-
done: let not thy contentment go
upon crutches, which may ſoon fail;
the ground of contentment muſt be
within thy ſelf. The word *aylapara*,
which is uſed for contentment, ſig-
nifies ſelfe-ſufficiency; a Chriſtian
hath that from within that is able to
ſupport him; that ſtrength of faith
and good hope through grace, as beares
up his heart in the deficiency of out-
ward

ward comforts. The Philosophers of old, when their estates were gone, yet could take contentment in the goods of the minde, their learning and vertue, and shall not a-believer much more in the grace of the Spirit, that rich enamel and embroidery of the soul. Say with thy selfe. If friends leave me, if riches take wings, yet I have that which comforts me, viz. an heavenly treasure. *Omnia mea mecum porto* when the blossomes of my estate are blown off. Still there is the sap of contentment in the root of my heart. I have still an interest in God, and that interest cannot be broken off. Oh never place your felicity in these dull and beggerly things here below.

SECT.

Rule. Let us often compare our
condition

Quest. How should I compare?
Ans. Make this five-fold com-
parison.

Let us compare our condition
and our desert together; if we have

not what we desire, we have more
than we deserve. For our mercies
we have deserved less; for our afflic-
tions, we have deserved more.

First, in regard of our mercies, we
have deserved less. What can we
deserve? Can man be profitable to the
Almighty? we live upon free grace.

Alexander gave a great gift to one
of his subjects; the man being much
taken with it, This (saith he) is more
than I am worthy of; I do not give
thee this, saith the King, because thou

art

art worthy of it, but I give a gift like Alexander. Whatever we have is not merit, but bounty; the least bit of bread is more then God owes us; we can bring faggots to our own burning, but not one flower to the garland of our salvation; he that hath the least mercy, will die in Gods debt.

2. Secondly, in regard of our afflictions, we have deserved more. *Thou*

** Ezra 9: Hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve *.*

Is our condition such we have deserved it should be worse; hath God taken away our estate from us: he might have taken away Christ from us; hath he thrown us into prison: he might have thrown us into hell; he might as well damne us, as whip us; this should make us contented.

2. Comparison.

** Dum tibi aliena pericula memoras, mitius portas tua. l'ld. Soliloq 1. 1.*

Let us compare our conditions with others, and this will make us content; we look at them who are above us; let us look at them who are below us; we see one in his

filks,

silks, another in his sackcloth; one hath the waters of a full cup wrung out to him, another is mingling his drink with teares; how many pale faces do we behold, whom not sickness, but want hath brought into a consumption I think of this, and be content. His worse with them, who perhaps deserve better then we, and are higher in Gods favour. Am I in prison? was not *Daniel* in a worse place, viz. the Lions den? Do I live in a mean cottage? look on them who are banished from their houses. We read of the primitive Saints, that they wandered up & down in Sheeps skins and Goats skins, of whom the world was not worthy. Hast thou a gentle fit of an Ague? look on them who are tormented with the stone and gout, &c. others of Gods children have had greater afflictions, and have borne them better then we. *Daniel* fed upon pulse and drank water, yet was fairer then they who

* Heb. 11;
37.

S

are

**Dan.1.15* ate of the Kings portion * ; some Christians who have been in a lower condition, that have fed upon pulse and water, have looked better; *viz.* been more patient and contented then we who enjoy abundance. Do others rejoyce in affliction, and do we repine? Can they take up their crosse and walk chearfully under it, and do we under a lighter cross murmur?

3. Let us compare our condition with Christs upon Earth; what a poor, mean condition was he pleased to be in for us: he was contented with any thing. *For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poore**. He could have brought down an house from heaven with him, or challenged the high places of the earth; but he was contented to be in the wine-presse, that we might be in the wine-cellar; and to live poor, that we might die rich; the manger

**2Cor.8.9*

was

was his cradle, the cobwebs his canopy; he who is now preparing mansions for us in heaven, had none for himself on earth, *he had no where to lay his head.* Christ came in *Forma pauperis*; who *being in the forme of God, took upon him the forme of a seruant**. We reade not of any summes of money he had; when he wanted money, he was faine to work a miracle for it*. Jesus Christ was in a low condition, he was never high, but when he was lifted up upon the Crosse, and that was his humility; he was content to live poore, and die cursed. Oh compare your condition with Christs.

* Phil. 2 7.

* Mat. 17 27.

4. Let us compare our condition with what it was once, and this will make us content.

4. *compari-
son.*

First, let us compare our *spiritual estate* with what it was once. What were we when we lay in our blood? we were heirs apparent to hel, having no right to pluck one leafe from the

i.

*Eph. 2. 12

tree of the promise; it was a *Christlesse* and *hopelesse* condition, *Ephes. 2. 12.* but now God hath cut off the entaile of hell and damnation; he hath taken you out of the wild Olive of nature, and ingrafted you into Christ, making you living branches of that living Vine; he hath not onely caused the light to shine *upon* you, but *into* you*, and hath interested you in all the priviledges of sonship; is not here that may make the soul content?

*2 Cor. 4 6

2.

Secondly, let us compare our *temporal estate* with what it was once: alas, we had nothing when we stepp'd out of the womb; *For we brought no-*

*Tim. 6. 7.

*thing with us into the world**, if we have not that which we desire, we have more then we did bring with us; we brought nothing with us (*but sinne;*) other creatures bring something with them into the world; the Lamb brings wooll, the silke-worme silke, &c. but we brought nothing with us. What if our con-

dition

dition at present be low ? it is better
 then it was once ; therefore having
 food and raiment, let us be content;
 whatever we have, Gods providence
 fetcht it in to us ; and if we lose all,
 yet we have as much as we brought
 with us. I his was that that made *Job*
 content, *Naked came I out of my mo-*
*thers womb** ; as if he had said, though *Job 1. 21.*
 God hath taken away all from me,
 yet why should I murmur ? I am as
 rich now as I was when I came into
 the world ; I have as much left as I
 brought with me ; naked came I hi-
 ther ; Therefore blessed be the Name
 of the Lord.

5. Let us compare our condition *5. Comp-*
 with what it shall be shortly. There is *arison.*
 a time shortly coming , when if we
 had all the riches of *India*, they would
 do us no good, we must die, and can
 carry nothing with us ; so saith the A-
 postle, *It is certaine , we can carry no-*
*thing out of the world ** ; therefore it ** 1 Tim.*
 follows, *having food and raiment, let* *6. 7.*

1. Tim. 6. 8.
*Vetera
 frangantur
 sepulchra,
 ossa divi-
 tum agnos-
 cas, non res.*
 Bede.

- be therewith content, verse 8. Open the rich mans grave, and see what is there; you may finde the *Misers* bones, but not his riches: were we indeed to live for ever here, or could we carry our riches into another world, then indeed we might be discontented when we look upon our empty bags; but it is not so: God may presently seale a warrant for death to apprehend us; and when we die, we cannot carry our estate with us. Honour and riches descend not into the grave, why then are we troubled at our outward condition? why do we disguise our selves with discontent? Oh lay up a stock of grace, be rich in faith and good works, these *riches will follow us**; no other coine but grace will passe current in heaven, silver and gold will not go there; labour to *be rich towards God**; and as for other things, be not solicitous, *we shall carry nothing with us.*
- * Rev. 14.
 13.
 * Luk. 12.
 21.

SECT. II.

II. Rule. Go not to bring your condition to your minde, but bring your minde to your condition.

The way for a Christian to be contented, is not by raising his estate higher, but by bringing his spirit lower; not by making his barnes wider, but his heart narrower; one man a whole Lordship or Mannor will not content; another is satisfied with a few acres of land; what is the difference? the one studies to satisfy curiosity, the other necessity; the one thinks what he may have, the other what he may spare.

* Non qui parum habet, sed qui plus cupit, pauper est. Laert. Diogenes.

* Si vis esse Dives (inquit Pythagoras) non est pecunia adjicienda, sed cupiditatibus detrahenda.

* Πλεσιος ὅ ἐν ὁ

πολλῶν χρημάτων δεόμενος, καὶ πολλὰ περιβεβλημένος, ἀλλ' ὁ μηδὲν χρεῖαν ἔχων. Chrysost.

S E C T. 12.

12. Rule. *Study the vanity of the creature.*

It matters not whether we have more or lesse of these things, they have vanity written upon the frontispice of them; the world is like a *shadow that declineth*; it is delightful, but deceitful; it promiseth more than we finde, and it failes us when we have most need of it *. All the world rings changes, and is constant onely in its disappointments: what then if we have lesse of that which is at best but voluble and fluid? The world is as full of *mutation as motion*; and what if God cuts us short in sub-lunaries? The more a man hath to do with the world, the more he hath to do with vanity. The world may be compared to yce, which is smooth, but

* O quam
tumesce in
rebus inae-
que!

but slippery ; or to the Egyptian Temples, without very beautiful and sumptuous, but within nothing to be seene but the image of an Ape ; every creature saith concerning satisfaction, *It is not in me.* The world is not a filling, but a flying comfort.

'Tis like a game at Tennis ; Providence bandies her golden balls, first to one, then to another. Why are we discontented at the losse of these things, but because we expect that from them which is not, and repose that in the, which we ought not? *Jonah*

was exceeding glad of the Gourd? 4. 6.

what a vanity was it ? is it much to see a withering Gourd smitten : or to see the Moone dressing it self in a new shape and figure ?

Jonah
4. 6.

*Quid est
omnis huius
mundi vo-
luptas? an-
non virens
hederam, que
textili syl-*

*va per parietem inserpit, lesa mique supra caput umbram expli-
cat? paravit Deus vermem & percussit hederam, & exaruit;
ita pro sua hederam nostram subito marcescunt, simulque cum illa
perit illud umbratile gaudium, Drexel. de Ater. p. 163,*

SECT.

SECT. 13.

13. Rule. Get phancy regulated.

It is the phancy which raiseth the price of things above their reall worth; what is the reason one Tulip is worth five pounds, another perhaps not worth one shilling: phancy raiseth the price; the difference is rather imaginary then reall: so, why it should be better to have thousands then hundreds, is, because men phan-

* *Stans humilis efficit vir-*
tutis gymnasium Archetipus

* *Dulcis proficiens aqua si-*
ve ē Petra fluens, sive in po-
culo, sive ex mandibulo asini,
ad restringendam sitim suffi-
cit. Panis sub cineribus, mel
agreste possunt te fortem red-
dere aquē ac cibus splendi-
dissimus. Hyperius.

cy it so; if we could phancy a lower condi-
tion better, * as having
lesse care in it, and lesse
account, it would be
far more eligible; the
water that springs out
of the rock, drinks as
sweet, as if it came out of a golden
chalice*; things are as we phancy
them.

them. Ever since the fall, the phancy is distempered; God saw't that the imagination of the thoughts of his heart were evill*. Phancy looks through ^{Gen. 6. 5.} wrong spectacles; pray that God will sanctifie your phancy; a lower condition would content, if the minde and phancy were set right. *Diogenes* preferred his Cynical life before *Alexanders* royalty; he phancied his little cloyster best. *Fabricius* a poor man, yet despised the gold of King *Pyrhus*.

—— *Contentus honesto*

Fabricius parvo spernebat munera regum,

Sudabatque gravi Consul Serranus aratro. Claud. l. 1.

Could we cure a distempered phancy, we might soone conquer a discontented heart.

SECT.

SECT. 14.

14. Rule. Consider how little will suffice nature.

The body is but of small continent, and is easily recruited. Christ hath mat. 6. 11. taught us to pray for our daily bread, *Parva seges saties est*, nature is content with a little; *μὴ διψᾷ, μὴ πεινᾷ*, not to thirst, not to starve is enough, saith Gregory Nazianzen; meat and drinke is a Christians riches, saith St. Hierome, and the Apostle saith, Having food and raiment, let us be content.

1. Tim. 6. 8.
Cibus &
peus sunt
divitie
Christianorum.

— O prodiga rerum
Luxuries, nunquam parvo contenta paratu,
Et quasitorum pelago, terrâq; ciborum
Ambitiosa Fames, & laeta gloria mensa!
Discite quàm parvo liceat producere vitam,
Et

Et quantum natura petat. ———

Lucan. l. 4. *Pharsal.*

The stomach is sooner fill'd then the eye ; How quickly would a man be content, if he would study rather to satisfie his *hunger* then his *humour*?

SECT. 15.

15. Rule. *Beleeve the present condition is best for us.*

Flesh and blood is not a competent judge. Surfeited stomachs are for banquetting stufte ; but a man that regards his health, is rather for solid food. Vaine men fancy such a condition best, and would flourish in their bravery ; whereas a wise Christian hath his will melted into Gods will, and thinks it best to be at his finding. God is wise, he knowes whether we need food, or physick ; and if we could acquiesce
- in

in providence, the quarrell would soon be at an end. O, what a strange creature would man be, if he were what he could wish himself? Be content to be at Gods allowance. God knowes which is the fittest pasture to put his sheep in; Sometimes a more barren ground doth well, whereas rank pasture may rot. Do I meet with such a crosse? God shewes me what the world is; he hath no better way to weane me, then by putting me to a step-mother. Doth God stint me in my allowance? he is now dieting me. Do I meet with losses? it is that God may keep me from being lost. Every crosse-winde shall at last blow me to the right port. Did we beleve that condition best which God doth parcell out to us, we should chearfully submit, and say; *The lines are fallen in pleasant places.*

SECT.

SECT. 16.

16. Rule, *Doe not too much indulge the flesh.*

We have taken an oath in Baptisme to *forsake the flesh*. The flesh is a worse enemy then the devil; it is a *boosome traitour*: an enemy within is worst. If there were no devil to tempt, the flesh would be another *Eve* to tempt to the *forbidden fruit*. Oh take heed of giving way to it; whence is al our discontent, but from the fleshly part? The flesh puts us upon the immoderate pursuit of the world; it consults for ease and plenty; and if it be not satisfied, then discontents begin to arise. Oh, let it not have the reines, martyr the flesh; in spirituall things the flesh is a *slug-gard*, in secular things an *Horsleeche*, crying, Give, give. The flesh is an enemy

* Non du-
rum est
quod pati-
mur, sed
molles su-
mus. Se-
necca.

enemy to suffering*, it will sooner make a man a *Courtier* then a *Martyr*. Oh keep it under; put its neck under Christs yoke, stretch and naile it to his Crosse; never let a Christian look for *contentment* in his spirit, till there be *confinement* in his flesh.

SECT. 17.

17 Rule. *Meditate much on the glory which shall be revealed.*

There are great things laid up in heaven. Though it be sad for the present, yet let us be content in that it will shortly be better; it is but a while, and we shall be with Christ, bathing our souls in the fountaine of his love; we shall never complain of wants or injuries any more; our crosse may be heavie, but one sight of Christ will make us forget all our former sorrowes. There are two things should give contentment.

1. That God will make us able to bear

hear our troubles*. God, (saith Chry-
ostome) doth like a Lutenist, who
will not let the strings of his Lute be
too slack, lest it spoile the musick;
nor will he suffer them to be too hard
stretched, or scrued up, lest they
break: So doth God deal with us,
he will not let us have too much
prosperity, lest this spoile the musick
of prayer and repentance; nor yet too
much adversity, lest the spirit faile
before him, and the soules which he
hath made*.

* 1 Cor.
10. 13.
Chrysost.

2. When we have suffered *a while**,
we shall be perfected in glory; the
Crosse shall be our ladder by which
we shall climbe up to heaven. Be then
content, and the scene will alter.
God will ere long turn our water in-
to wine; the hope of this is enough
to drive away all distempers from
the heart. Blessed be God, it will
be better: *We have no continued City*
*here**, therefore our afflictions cannot
continue. A wise man looks still to

* Isa. 57.
16.
* 1 Pet. 5.
10.

* Heb. 13.

T

the

the end : *The end of the just man is peace**. Me thinks the smoothnesse of the end should make amends for the ruggednesse of the way. O eternity, eternity ! think often of the *Kingdome prepared*. David was advanced from the field to the throne. First he held his *Shepherds staffe*, and shortly after, the *Royall Scepter*. Gods people may be put to hard services here ; but God hath chosen them to be *Kings*, to sit upon the throne with the Lord Jesus. This being weighed in the balance of Faith, would be an excellent meanes to bring the heart to contentment.

S E C T. 18.

18. Rule. *Be much in prayer.*

The last Rule for Contentment is, *Be much in prayer*. Beg of God, that he wil work our hearts to this blessed frame ; *Is any man afflicted? let him pray**. So, is any man discontented?

*Jam. 5. 13.

let

let him pray. Prayer gives vent. The opening of a vein, lets out the bad blood: When the heart is filled with sorrow and disquiet, prayer lets out the bad blood. The key of prayer oiled with teares *, unlocks the heart of all its discontents. Prayer is an holy spell or charme to drive away trouble; Prayer is the unbosoming of the soule; the unloading of all our cares in Gods brest, and this ushers in sweet contentment. When there is any burden upon our spirits, by opening our minde to a friend, we finde our hearts finely eased and quieted. It is not our *strong resolutions*, but our *strong requests* to God which must give the heart ease in trouble; by Prayer the strength of Christ is brought into the soule; and where that is, a man is able to go through any condition. *Paul* could be in every state content: but that you may not think he was able to do this of himself; he tells you, that though

* Expletiv
lacrymæ,
gerit utq;
dolor.

he could want and a-
 bound, and *πάντα ποιῶν*
 * *Ἄλλ' ἐπὶ τῇ μεγάλῃ* *δοῖ all things* * ; yet it
γοεῖα τὸ πνεῦμα ἡμῶν ὅσα
πῶς ἐπιλαμβάνεται, τα-
χέως πάντα ἐξω ἐν τῷ
ἐνδυναμῶνι μὲν Χριστοῦ
ἐκ ἐμὸν τὸ κατ' ὁρμαίαι
ἀλλὰ τὸ τῆν ἰσχὺν δεύω.
νότ' ἐστίν. Chrysostom

Scrivener guides his
 hand. St. Paul arrived
 at the hardest duty in Religion, viz.
Contentment; but the Spirit was his
Pilot, and Christ his strength; and
 this strength was ushered in by holy
 prayer. Prayer is a powerfull Ora-
 tour. Prayer is an *exorcist* with
 God, and an *exorcist* against sin. The
 best way is to pray down discontent.
 What *Luther* saith of *Concupiscence*,
 I may say of *Discontent*; Prayer is a
 sacred Leech* to suck out the ve-
 nome, and swelling of this passion.
 Prayer composeth the heart, and
 brings it into tune. Hath God de-
 prived you of many comforts? blesse
 God that he left you the Spirit of
 Prayer.

* *ratio est*
hivudo
anima.

Use 6.

Use. 6. The last use is of comfort, Use. IV
or encouraging word to the con- *Consolation*
tented Christian. If there be an hea-
ven upon earth, thou hast it. O
Christian, thou may'st insult over
thy troubles, and with the *Leviathan*
laugh at the shaking of a spear, *Job* 41. 29.
41. 29. What shall I say? thou art
a crown to thy profession; thou dost
hold it out to all the world, that
there's vertue enough in Religion to
give the soul contentment. Thou
shewest height of grace. When grace
is *crowning*, it is not so much for us
to be content; but when grace is
conflicting, and meets with crosses,
tentations, agonies; now to be con-
tent, this is a glorious thing in-
deed.

To a contented Christian, I shall
say two things for a farewell.

First, God is exceedingly taken
with such a frame of heart. God saith
of a contented Christian, as *David*
once said of *Goliath's* sword, *There is*

wone like that, give it me, 1 Sam. 21.
 ¶ If you would please God, and be
 men of his heart, be contented. It is
 said, that *Rebecca* made *Isaac* savoury
 meat, such as her husband loved,
 would ye give God such a dish as he
 loves? bring him this of Content-
 ment. The Musician hath many les-
 sons to play, but he hath one above
 all the rest: There are many lessons
 of holy Musick that delight God, the
 lesson of repentance, humility, &c.
 But this lesson of Contentment is
 the sweetest lesson that a Beleever
 can play. God hates a froward spi-
 rit.

Secondly, the contented Chri-
 stian shall be no loser. What lost *Job*
 by his patience? God gave him three
 times as much as he had before.
 What lost *Abram* by his content-
 ment? he was content to leave his
 Countrey at Gods call; the Lord
 makes a Covenant with him, that he
 would be his God, Gen. 17. He
 changeth

changerh his name; no more *Abram*,
 but *Abraham* the Father of many
 Nations. God makes his seed as
 the Starres of heaven; nay, honours
 him with this title, *The Father of*
the Faithfull. The Lord makes
 known his secrets to him, - *Shall* Gen. 18. 17
I hide from Abraham the thing that I
will do? God settles a rich inheri-
 tance upon him, that land which was
 a type of heaven, and afterwards
 translated him into the blessed Para-
 dise. God will be sure to reward the
 contented Christian. As our Saviour
 said in another case to *Nathanael*,
Because I said I saw thee under the
fig-tree, beleevest thou? thou shalt see
greater things then these. So, I John 1. 50.
 say, Art thou contented (O Christi-
 an) with a little? thou shalt see
 greater things then these; God
 will distill the sweet influences of his
 love into thy soule: He will raise
 thee up friends, he will blesse the
 oile in the cruse; and when that is
 done,

done, he will crowne thee with an
 eternall enjoyment of himselfe; he
 will give thee Heaven, where thou
 shalt have as much contentment
 as thy soule can possibly thirst
 after.



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